NATION

**Kerala firm accused of physically torturing 'under-performers'**

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

**RBI likely to cut rate by 25 bps this week: Experts**

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

**India ends World Boxing Cup campaign on a high with six-medal haul**

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

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## 3 women killed as car rams compound wall in Hubballi

**HUBBALLI, 6 APRIL**

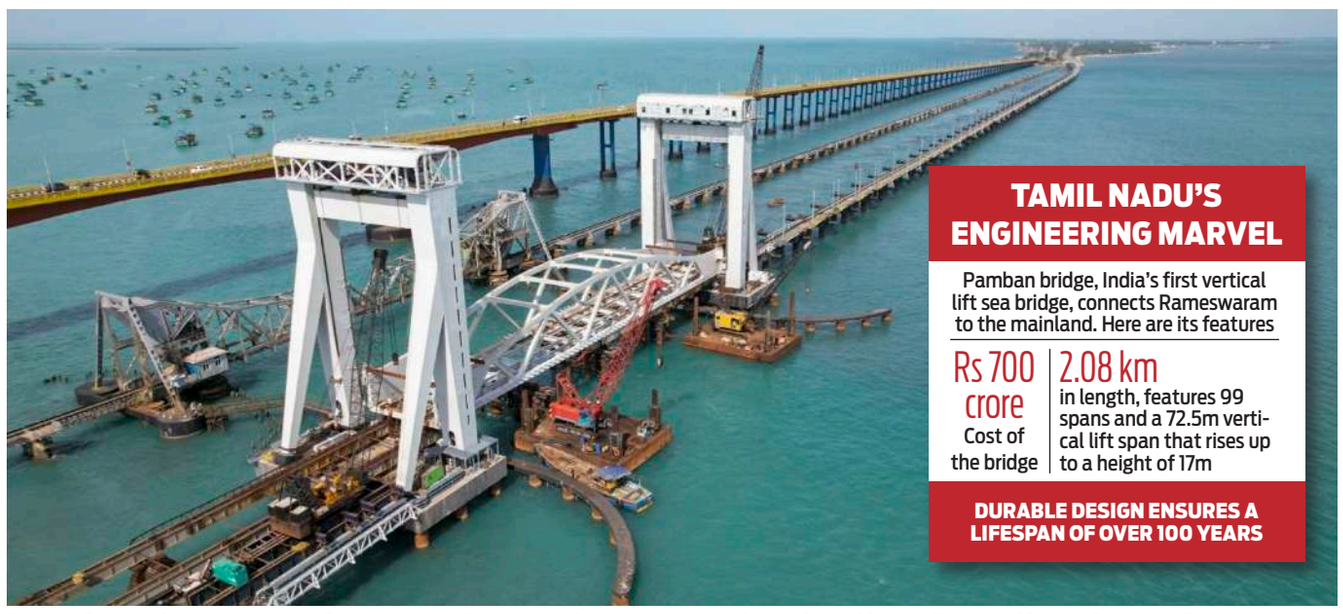
Three women were killed after the car they were travelling in crashed into a compound near Noolvi Cross in Hubballi on Saturday night, police said. The deceased were residents of Lingaraj Nagar. Two others, who were critically injured, have been admitted to a government hospital for treatment. The women were travelling from Varur village towards Hubballi when the driver lost control near Noolvi Cross, hit the road divider, and then crashed into a compound wall. The car was severely damaged in the accident. *—PTI*

## 7 die after treatment by 'fake' doc in MP

**DAMOH, 6 APRIL**

Seven people died allegedly after being treated by a fake cardiologist at a missionary hospital in Madhya Pradesh's Damoh district, prompting the NHRC to launch a probe into the matter. A team of the National Human Rights Commission will camp in Damoh from 7 to 9 April to conduct an investigation into the matter, NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo said. As per a complaint lodged by a local resident with the NHRC, Narendra Vikramaditya Yadav used the name 'Dr N John Camm', to portray himself as if he was educated and trained abroad. Professor John Camm is a famous cardiologist, currently in the United Kingdom. *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 4*



**TAMIL NADU'S ENGINEERING MARVEL**

Pamban bridge, India's first vertical lift sea bridge, connects Rameswaram to the mainland. Here are its features

**Rs 700 crore** — Cost of the bridge

**2.08 km** — in length, features 99 spans and a 72.5m vertical lift span that rises up to a height of 17m

**DURABLE DESIGN ENSURES A LIFESPAN OF OVER 100 YEARS**

The new Pamban Bridge, connecting Rameswaram with mainland India, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday at Rameswaram in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu *PHOTO: PTI*

# At least sign your name in Tamil: Modi's jibe at Stalin

## TN CM hit back saying PM must assuage fears over delimitation

**RAMANATHAPURAM/ UDHAGAMANDALAM 6 APRIL**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday took a sharp jibe at Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin amid the ongoing language row, saying that he is surprised that none of the letters he received from Tamil Nadu ministers are signed in the Tamil language.

Modi said, "If you are proud of Tamil, then I would request everyone at least sign your name in Tamil."

Modi also inaugurated the Pamban bridge, India's first vertical lift sea bridge and flagged off train service linking Rameswaram island to the rest of the country

PM Narendra Modi in Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram *PHOTO: PTI*

Stalin skipped the event and upped the ante on the delimitation issue saying Modi should allay the fears of the people on the proposed exercise, Modi, without naming anyone, hit back by picking the Tamil pitch. He batted for imparting medical education in Tamil medium to help the poor and said the state got 11 new medical colleges in recent years.

Against the background of DMK regime crying foul over fund allocation to the state, Modi said over the past decade, the central government has allocated three times more funds for Tamil Nadu's development compared to the period before 2014.

Stalin on the other hand, after inaugurating a slew of projects and announcing new schemes to the popular tourist spot here, said he has sought an appointment with Modi to present the memorandum on the concerns surrounding the proposed delimitation. "You (Modi) should also ensure that a resolution in this regard is passed in the Parliament. This (delimitation) not only leads to a reduction of Parliamentary seats, it is our right to ask and at the same time, it is also a cause of worry about our future," he said. *—ANI/PTI*

# Fresh plea in SC challenges new Waqf Bill

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

- It is alleged that the 2025 Act was against the federal principles of Constitution as it takes away all powers of the state governments and State Waqf Boards.

A fresh plea has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, claiming it was a "blatant intrusion" into the rights of a religious denomination to manage its own affairs in the matter of religion protected under Article 26.

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday gave her assent to the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which was earlier passed by Parliament after heated debates in both Houses.

Several petitions have been filed in the apex court challenging the validity of the bill.

The fresh petition has been filed by Samastha Kerala Jamiathul Ulema, a religious organisation of Sunni Muslim scholars and clerics in Kerala.

The plea, filed through advocate Zulfiker Ali P S, said these amendments would distort the religious character of Waqfs while also irreversibly damaging the democratic process in the administration of Waqf and Waqf Boards.

It alleged that the 2025 Act was against the federal principles of Constitution as it takes away all powers of the state governments and State Waqf Boards in connection with Waqfs and accumulates all powers into the hands of the Central government.

"The cumulative effect of these provisions will be highly detrimental to Waqfs at large and the Muslim community will be deprived of large tract of Waqf properties on account of operation of these provisions," the plea said.

Several pleas, including those by Congress MP Mohammad Jawed, AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi and AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan, were filed in the top court challenging the validity of the bill. In his separate plea, Owaisi said the law takes away from Waqfs various protection which are accorded to Waqfs and Hindus, Jain and Sikh religious and charitable endowments alike and violated Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is also set to challenge the Bill with Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha filing a petition on behalf of the party. *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 3*

## CONG WANTS DKS TO STAY ON AS KPCC CHIEF

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

The power tussle and squabbling in the ruling Congress in Karnataka has subsided for the time being as the party High Command told Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar to continue as the party state unit chief, Congress sources said on Sunday.

Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah spent last Thursday and Friday in New Delhi, where they met Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

The meeting assumes significance as a campaign has begun to replace Shivakumar as the party State President. *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 2*

## Starmer declares end of globalisation?

**LONDON, 6 APRIL**

The United Kingdom's Prime Minister Keir Starmer is scheduled to declare the end of the era of globalisation following US President Donald Trump's hardline reciprocal tariffs and 'America First' policy that triggered a global trade war pushing markets into the shadows of uncertainty, according to a report.

Writing in 'The Sunday Telegraph', Starmer said that nobody wins from a trade war and called for calm as the UK fights for the best trade deal. He reiterated that "all options remain on the table" as he indicated the possibility of state intervention to protect businesses.

"The economic consequences, here and across the globe, could be profound. We already have a balanced trading relationship with our American allies and work continues on a new economic prosperity deal," writes Starmer.

"I will only strike a deal if it is right for British business and the security of working people. And I will continue to make the case for free and open trade, because turning our back on that now would be a grave mistake," he said.

*—Agencies*

*>>>More on Page 6*

> **The economic consequences, here and across the globe, could be profound. We already have a balanced trading relationship with our American allies and work continues on a new economic prosperity deal** —Keir Starmer, UK PM

## FARMER DALLEWAL ENDS HUNGER STRIKE AFTER 130 DAYS

**CHANDIGARH, 6 APRIL**

Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal on Sunday ended his hunger strike which he had started on 26 November last year to press for various demands of agitating farmers including a legal guarantee on the minimum support price for crops. At the same time, he asserted that their fight continues.

The announcement came a day after Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu appealed to him to end his fast-unto-death.

Dallewal announced that he was ending his indefinite fast at a 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' organised at the grain market in Punjab. *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 2*

## US UNITES AGAINST TRUMP

Thousands of protesters flooded the streets of Chicago and major US cities on Saturday to oppose the policies of President Donald Trump, in the largest demonstrations since his return to the White House. The protests called 'Hands Off!' even extended to parts of Europe *PHOTO: X/@ARTCANDEE*

*>>>More on Page 6*

## SHAH ARRIVES IN JAMMU ON 3-DAY TOUR

**JAMMU, 6 APRIL**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah reached here Sunday to commence his three-day tour of Jammu and Kashmir, his first after the formation of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government in the Union Territory in October last year.

He will visit a forward post along the India-Pakistan border and review the security situation and development initiatives during his tour.

The visit of Shah to the BJP headquarters coincided with the party's foundation day which was celebrated by BJP activists and leaders at the headquarters with great fervour earlier during the day. On Monday, Shah will visit the BSF Border Outpost Vinay in Kathua and assess the ground situation there. *—PTI*

**'STOP ROAD WIDENING'**

# *Activists oppose lifting of night traffic ban in Bandipur Tiger Reserve*

**MYSURU, 6 APRIL**

Activists organised a "Bandipur chalo" walkathon in Chamarajanagar district to protest against Kerala government's demands to lift the night ban on vehicles at Bandipur Tiger Reserve (BTR), on Sunday. The protest was taken out by members of the United Conservation Movement (UCM), environmentalists, farmers and various Kannada organisations.

The Kerala government has been pushing for the ban to be lifted to facilitate smoother traffic between Kerala and Bengaluru via Mysuru and Chamarajanagar.

Around 200 people, holding placards and banners, walked from Kaggalahundi in Gundlupet to the Maddur checkpoint.

Addressing the protesters at a public meeting held at Maddur checkpost, environmentalist Senani said ruling governments must understand that human beings are also protected by the conservation of the forest. In recent years, one vehicle has been passing through Bandipur Tiger Reserve every 15 minutes, but now, one vehicle passes through it every five seconds, according to a survey. The removal or relaxation of the night traffic ban will result in the destruction of biodiversity in Bandipur forests, he said.

The protest was taken out by members of the United Conservation Movement (UCM) and environmentalists *PHOTO: SALAR*

- Kannada Chaluvali Vatal Party leader Vatal Nagaraj also held a protest at the Jayachamarajendra Circle in Mysuru, against the state government.

Senani also urged the government to stop the road widening and development works such as the construction of overbridges along the forest stretch.

Several environmentalists, such as Krupakara, Joseph Hoover and retired forest officer Balachandra joined the protest.

Kannada Chaluvali Vatal Party leader Vatal Nagaraj also held a protest at the Jayachamarajendra Circle in Mysuru, against the state government's intention to lift the night traffic ban through Bandipur Tiger Reserve.

He said the reserve forest would suffer if the State government yielded to the neighbouring Kerala government's lobbying for the lifting or relaxation of the night traffic ban. The population of tigers will decrease from the current 150 in Bandipur Tiger Reserve if the state government relaxed the night traffic ban, he said. *—Salar News & Agencies*

## City bank recovery agent attacked by loan defaulter

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

A private bank's loan recovery executive, Chandan, was severely injured after being struck on the head with a stone by a loan defaulter, Ramesh, in Annapoorneshwari Nagar on Saturday morning. Chandan had visited Ramesh, who had defaulted on loan EMI payments for two months. After repeated attempts to contact him, the bank sent Chandan for recovery. When the two met near the BDA Complex in Nagarabhavi, an argument over the unpaid dues escalated, leading Ramesh to throw a stone at Chandan. The attacker fled the scene before help arrived. Chandan was hospitalised with a head injury. A case has been filed.
*—Salar News*

## Minor killed as tractor overturns in Whitefield

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

A nine-year-old girl was killed when a tractor overturned while navigating the bund of a lake near Pattandur Agrahara in Whitefield, sources said. The deceased is Isinaka Bhat. The incident occurred on Saturday around noon when the tractor, driven by the child's father, was heading to its shed with both his daughters – aged six and nine– seated on the vehicle. Police said the tractor was moving along the elevated bund of the Agrahara lake when the driver apparently lost control, causing the vehicle to overturn. While the younger child and the father escaped with minor injuries, the elder girl died on the spot. Police suspect that the driver's negligence caused the accident.
*—Salar News*

## Jilted man ends life in Kollegal

**MYSURU, 6 APRIL**

A man at Satyagala Jageri in Kollegal taluk ended his life on Saturday after a girl rejected his marriage proposal, police said. The deceased has been identified as Johnson Vijay, 23. Police said that Johnson was in love with a girl from the same village, but her parents did not approve of the relationship and had also filed a case against him in Kollegal Rural police station. Police said that Johnson took the extreme step after the girl rejected his proposal again on Saturday.
*—Salar News*

*Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.*

## Class VIII student kills self in Chamarajnagar

**MYSURU, 6 APRIL**

A Class VIII student, depressed over poor performance in examinations, allegedly ended life by consuming poison at Agara village in Yelandur taluk of Chamarajnagar district on Saturday. Though his parents rushed him to hospital, he died during treatment. The victim has been identified as Prabuswamy. The father of Prabuswamy has informed police that his son consumed pesticide to kill himself. Mamballi Police have registered a case of unnatural death and started an investigation.
*—Salar News*

*Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.*

# Cong top brass wants DKS to stay on as KPCC Chief

## This decision sinks hopes of several MLAs, ministers

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

The power tussle and squabbling in the ruling Congress in Karnataka has subsided for the time being as the party High Command told Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar to continue as the party state unit chief, Congress sources said on Sunday.

Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah spent last Thursday and Friday in New Delhi, where they met Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

The meeting assumes significance as a campaign has begun to replace Shivakumar as the party state president.

Several MLAs and Ministers believed to be from Siddaramaiah camp want Shivakumar to discontinue as the Congress state chief.

They have been demanding the strict adherence of the party policy of 'one person, one post'.

There are reports about a secret pact that Siddaramaiah would helm the first half of the Congress' five-year tenure in Karnataka, who will be replaced by Shivakumar.

Several MLAs and Ministers believed to be from Siddaramaiah camp want DK Shivakumar to discontinue as the Congress State Chief ***PHOTO: PTI***

Shivakumar's rivals in the party have been demanding his removal from the position of the state Deputy Chief Minister and Congress president.

The argument is also that a person holding a ministerial position cannot do justice to the state president's post as he cannot give time to the party cadres willing to meet him.

Party high command is not keen on replacing Shivakumar considering his immense contribution to the party especially in winning the assembly elections, good performance of parry during Lok Sabha elections and in winning all three assembly bypolls, the sources said.

"The party high command was not inclined to replace Shivakumar at least till November and December this year," a senior party functionary said.

There are reports about a secret pact that Siddaramaiah would helm the first half of the Congress' five-year tenure in Karnataka, who will be replaced by Shivakumar.

Neither Siddaramaiah, nor Shivakumar have confirmed this but their supporter ministers and MLAs in the party have started lobbying for their leaders.

There were also discussions on Cabinet reshuffle, MLC elections and honey trap attempts on ministers and MLAs, the sources said. *—PTI*

# ED arrests Bhovi corp's ex-GM for money laundering

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

The Enforcement Directorate on Sunday said it has arrested a former general manager of the Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation (KBDC) following searches in a money laundering case related to alleged irregularities in the department.

B K Nagarajappa was taken into custody on April 5. A special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Bengaluru sent him to ED custody for 14 days, the federal probe agency said in a statement.

The money laundering case stems from multiple Karnataka Police FIRs filed on charges of "misuse and diversion" of funds worth Rs 97 crore from the KBDC, meant for the welfare of the Bhovi community, which is included in Karnataka's Scheduled Castes list.

The ED conducted searches against various accused in the case on April 4 and at the office of KBDC located at V V Tower in Bengaluru. It alleged that Nagarajappa was "instrumental" in the diversion of funds from the KBDC by using bank accounts of "fake" beneficiaries provided by agents from the Bhovi community.

"Funds were further layered and laundered through entities incorporated in the name of his accomplices in connivance with other suspects/accused," the agency claimed. The accused managed to "divert" funds from KBDC accounts to those of fake entities and beneficiaries and they were further transferred to friends and family members of the accused, it said. Several bank accounts were opened and many beneficiaries or intended beneficiaries were cheated by adopting a very well-designed and foolproof modus operandi by Nagarajappa and other co-accused, the ED claimed. *—PTI*

## BEAUTIFICATION OF SOUDHA

CM Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar and Assembly Speaker UT Khader inaugurate the permanent lighting installation at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Sunday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

# BJP to launch 16-day agitation

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

BJP will launch a 16 days' movement from Monday against price rise and four per cent reservation for Muslims in government contracts.

Addressing reporters on Sunday, the Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Assembly R Ashoka said the 'people's movement' will take place all over the state.

"This movement will take place in four phases," he said.

The first phase of the 'Janaakrosha Yatra' (Public Anger March) will cover Mysuru, Mandya, Hassan, Kodagu, Mangaluru, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts, he said.

The second phase will encompass Belagavi, Hubballi, Bagalkot, Kalaburagi, Vijayapura and Bidar.

The third phase will include Davangere, Haveri, Gadag, Koppal, Raichur, Chitradurga, Vijayanagara, Ballari and Tumakuru.

The fourth phase will cover Bengaluru Urban district, Bengaluru Rural district, Chikkaballapura, Kolar and Ramanagara. "People today are fed up with price rise. Life has become difficult due to exorbitant hike in prices of all essential commodities and services. We want to become the voice of people through this agitation," he said. *—PTI*

Supporters of Basavaraj Patil Yatnal protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Sunday, demanding his reinstatement following his expulsion from BJP ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

## HAPPY RAM NAVAMI

Devotees offer prayers at a temple in Bengaluru's Rajajinagar, on Sunday, celebrating the Ram Navami festival ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASA***

## Mysuru: Opposition grows against madrasa reopening

**MYSURU, 6 APRIL**

Days after Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Lakshmikanth Reddy authorised the reopening of a madrasa in the communally sensitive Kyathamaranahalli area of Udayagiri, local residents have strongly opposed the decision, claiming it threatens communal harmony.

Residents gathered at the Huliyamma temple on Sunday, including the family members of Raju, the Right-wing activist killed in 2016 for opposing the madrasa. The protesters expressed concerns that the madrasa's reopening could reignite tensions in the area, which had witnessed violent clashes following Raju's death.

The madrasa had been shut down nine years ago after Raju's murder, but following directions from the High Court, Reddy permitted its reopening on 3 April. Protesters, including Raju's mother, Chandramma, and advocate Ha Ma Bhaskar, argue that the madrasa operates on disputed land. Bhaskar to pursue legal action it. —Salar News

## DRIVER PLOTS THEFT

# *Cong's Kolar Municipal Councillor arrested for Rs 3 cr gold heist*

**KOLAR, 6 APRIL**

Andhra Pradesh police cracked a gold heist within three days, recovering 3.5kg of gold worth Rs. 3.5 crore. The stolen gold was recovered from four individuals, including Jayapal, a Congress leader and Municipal Councillor from Robertsonpet, Kolar Gold Field (KGF).

Jayapal, a prominent Congress figure in KGF, had previously served as Chairman of the KGF Urban Development Board and contested in the Assembly elections.

The heist occurred on 2 April when Chetan, a relative of gold merchant Deepak Jain, was transporting gold biscuits from Chennai to KGF.

According to sources in KGF, Deepak Jain, a gold jewellery businessman in KGF, had been sourcing gold from Chennai at cheaper rates and selling it to traders in KGF. The miscreants intercepted Chetan's vehicle near Nayakaneri around 8.45pm, threatening him and looting the entire stash of 3.5kg of gold.

3.5kg of gold was seized; Congress leader and Municipal Councillor Jayapal ***PHOTO: SALAR***

Deepak filed a complaint on 3 April, leading to the formation of four special police teams. Police investigated the call details of Mukram Pasha, the driver of the vehicle. The investigation revealed that Mukram had informed Jayapal and others about the gold shipment.

On 5 April, police intercepted an Innova car near Raghavapalli arresting Jayapal, his driver Babu, Mukram, and Shanmugam. Jayapal has confessed to orchestrating the robbery with 12 others from Peranampet. *—Salar News*

## SUITCASE MURDER CASE

Rakesh said Gauri used to fight with him and his parents over trivial issues ***PHOTO: SALAR***

# Man killed wife over pressure to leave City

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

The man who allegedly killed his wife and stuffed her body into a suitcase has confessed to the crime, claiming that he was driven to the act by her persistent demands to leave the City.

Rakesh Rajendra Khedekar from Maharashtra was arrested by the Hulimavu police while he was on the run after killing his wife Gauri Khedekar, 32, on 27 March at a rented house in Doddakammanahalli in the city.

Rakesh told police that Gauri, frustrated over not being able to find a job, began throwing household utensils to the street and attacked him with a knife during an argument. Rakesh confessed that in a fit of rage, he snatched the knife and stabbed her, leading to her death.

Rakesh said Gauri used to fight with him and his parents over trivial issues and persuaded him to move to Bengaluru. However, she insisted on moving back to their hometown a few weeks after moving to the city. He said. *—Salar News*

## Man's body found in bushes near Peenya

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

The body of a man was found dumped in a bushy area near Panchamukhi Layout in Karihobanahalli, under the jurisdiction of Peenya police station, sources said on Sunday.

A local resident found the body on Saturday morning and reported it to the police control room around 7.30am. Police conducted a preliminary investigation and shifted the body to Victoria Hospital for post-mortem examination, the sources said.

A police official said the deceased is aged between 25 and 30 years, but his identity is yet to be established. He said it appeared that he was a migrant labourer from Bihar.

"Based on preliminary investigations, it appears that the murder was committed elsewhere," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Bengaluru North) Saidulu Adavath, who inspected the crime scene. "We have started an investigation after we received the alert early in the morning," he said. Police sources said they were yet to find the location and motive of the murder. *—Salar News*

# 4 kill man over POCSO case in Bidar

**BIDAR, 6 APRIL**

Bidar Police have cracked the murder case of a Gram Panchayat member and real estate businessman that occurred on Friday near the Chikkapete–Aliyabad Ring Road.

Two people who committed the murder and two others who assisted them were arrested within seven hours of the incident in the Shahapur, the police said on Saturday.

District Superintendent of Police Pradeep Gunti said,

"John and Umesh from Navadgeri and Kumbarawada areas of Bidar, respectively, are the main accused. Their two accomplices are from Honnikeri. The mastermind behind the murder plot, a resident of Honnikeri, is absconding."

Sources said that Vaijnath Dattatreya, 49, from Honnikeri had supported a family involved in a POCSO and SC/ST atrocity case filed last year at Janawad Police Station by facilitating legal help for them.

One of Vaijnath's distant relatives allegedly plotted his murder to take revenge for assisting the family.

On Friday, while Vaijnath was having lunch at SK Dhaba, the assailants attacked him with machetes, resulting in his death. *—Salar News*

## Prez embarks on visit to Europe as global trade shifts

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

President Droupadi Murmu has begun a significant state visit to Portugal and the Slovak Republic—the first by an Indian president to either nation in over 25 years. The visit comes amid shifting global trade dynamics and efforts to strengthen India's ties with the European Union. In Portugal, President Murmu will meet President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, Prime Minister Luís Montenegro, and other senior leaders, marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Discussions will cover trade, renewable energy, education, tourism, and defence. In Slovakia, she will meet President Peter Pellegrini and visit the Jaguar Land Rover plant in Nitra, a key symbol of India-Slovakia industrial collaboration. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

## Naga chief urges govt to reconsider border fence plan

**LONGWA, 6 APRIL**

A tribal chief in Nagaland's Mon district has urged the Indian government to scrap plans to fence the Indo-Myanmar border and reduce the Free Movement Regime (FMR). Tonyei Phawang, the 10th-generation Angh (king) of Longwa village, highlighted the close familial and cultural ties shared by the Konyak Nagas living on both sides of the border. Phawang said his own ancestral house is divided by the international boundary, with parts lying in both India and Myanmar. "Even movement within my house would require a pass if fencing goes ahead," he remarked. He added that 35 villages fall under his authority, 30 of which lie in Myanmar. Villagers from across the border often come to Mon town for education, healthcare, and markets. "We do not want fencing," he remarked. *—PTI*

## Electricity staff fired for waving Palestine flag in UP

**SAHARANPUR, 6 APRIL**

A contract worker in Uttar Pradesh's electricity department has been dismissed for allegedly waving a Palestinian flag after Eid prayers in Saharanpur district. Saqib Khan, employed at the Kailashpur power house, was seen in photographs circulating on social media holding the flag after offering namaaz on 31 March. Electricity department executive engineer Sanjeev Kumar labelled the act as "anti-national", stating that immediate action was taken. A letter was sent to the contracting company instructing Khan's termination, which has since been confirmed. The incident follows similar action against eight individuals captured in a video waving Palestine flags and chanting slogans after Eid prayers at Ambala Road eidgah. Authorities said the flags were quickly removed by police and that further legal steps are being taken. *—PTI*

## Rahul Gandhi to lead march during Bihar visit

**PATNA, 6 APRIL**

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, will visit Bihar on Monday to take part in a state-wide 'pada-yatra' in Begusarai, Bihar, aimed at highlighting youth unemployment and migration. The campaign, titled "Palayan Roko, Naukri Do" (Stop Migration, Provide Jobs), calls attention to the scarcity of government employment and the limited benefits of privatisation. Gandhi, who will arrive in Patna in the morning, urged Bihar's youth to join him in the march wearing white T-shirts, via a video message on X. This marks his third visit to Bihar since January, as assembly elections approach. *—PTI*

# Thousands protest in Thane, Manipur against Waqf Bill

### 300 get notice for wearing black bands while protesting in UP

**THANE/IMPHAL/ MUZAFFARNAGAR 6 APRIL**

Several thousand people took part in a protest in Bhiwandi in Thane district against the Waqf Amendment Act, which they claimed was against the Constitution as it infringed on the fundamental rights of people.

The protest was held late Saturday night, with functionaries from the Aalmi Tehreek Raza Academy, All India Sunni Jamiatul Ulama, and several other groups representing the 'Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat' movement taking part.

"The bill violates the essence of the Constitution. It threatens the rights that belong to every Indian, whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, or Christian. This is not just a Muslim issue. People of all communities across the country are coming forward to protest," a cleric said addressing the protest.

Protests against Waqf Bill in Manipur PHOTO: X

Raza Academy founder Saeed Noori said he will lead a delegation to Delhi on 7 April to consult top constitutional experts and senior advocates to explore legal avenues, including the possibility of challenging the Act in the Supreme Court.

A Raza Academy spokesperson said time has been sought from President Droupadi Murmu on the issue.

Similarly, over 5,000 protested at Lilong in Imphal Valley on Sunday. Protests were also held in Kshatri Awang Leikai, Kairang Muslim and Kiyamgei Muslim areas in Imphal East, and Sora in Thoubal district, among other places.

"The Waqf Amendment Act is against the ethos of the Constitution. It is completely unacceptable for the Muslim community," said Sakir Ahmed, a protester.

Security has been strengthened in Muslim-dominated areas of the Valley, with additional forces deployed, officials said.

Meanwhile, authorities have issued notices to 300 people for protesting in Uttar Pradesh by wearing black badges during Friday prayers in mosques and asked them to furnish bonds of Rs 2 lakh each. The figure was 24 on Saturday.

Superintendent of Police (City) Satyanarayan Prajapat said 300 people were identified through CCTV footage. Efforts are on to identify more, he added. *—PTI*

**AFTER MODI VISIT**

# Sri Lanka releases 11 Indian fishermen

**COLOMBO, 6 APRIL**

PHOTO: PTI

Sri Lanka released at least 11 Indian fishermen as a special gesture, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched for resolving the vexed fishermen issue with a "humane approach".

The fishermen issue figured prominently during talks between Modi and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Saturday.

"We also discussed issues related to fishermen's livelihood. We agreed that we should proceed with a humane approach in this matter," Modi said in his statement after meeting Dissanayake. "We also emphasised on immediate release of the fishermen and their boats."

Meanwhile, Modi accompanied Dissanayake visited the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi temple in the historic city of Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka and paid respects at the revered Buddhist shrine.

The two leaders also jointly launched two railway projects built with Indian assistance in Anuradhapura.

Modi and Dissanayake inaugurated the 128 km Maho-Omanthai railway line refurbished with Indian assistance of USD 91.27 million, followed by the launch of the construction of an advanced signalling system from Maho to Anuradhapura.

The signalling system has been built with Indian grant of USD 14.89 million.

"These landmark railway modernisation projects implemented under the India-Sri Lanka development partnership represent a significant milestone in strengthening north-south rail connectivity in Sri Lanka," the Ministry of External Affairs said. *—PTI*

# Shah to visit TN amid AIADMK alliance talks

**CHENNAI, 6 APRIL**

PHOTO: ANI

Amidst talks of alliance with the AIADMK and political developments ahead of the state elections in 2026, Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to visit Chennai on a two-day visit, sources said.

According to a senior BJP leader here, Shah would be in Chennai late evening of April 10 and April 11, and is scheduled to meet senior BJP and RSS leaders including S. Gurumurthy, editor of Thuglak. Other details of his itinerary are not firmed up as of now.

Shah's visit to Chennai comes a week after AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami called on him in New Delhi, a move that sparked speculations that the BJP was looking to renew its alliance with the Dravidian party to contest in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election. Earlier, relations between the two parties had reportedly become strained after BJP state Chief K Annamalai had severely criticized Palaniswami.

Acrimonious exchanges between them had reportedly led to the breakdown of the alliance.

Sources say top leadership of the BJP is keen on an alliance with AIADMK, and hinted at a downsized role in the state for the Annamalai who has publicly stated that he would not be leading the party in Tamil Nadu for the 2026 Assembly election. *—Agencies*

**RSS WANTS 3CR PARTICIPANTS**

# WB police on high alert for 7-day Ram Navami celebrations

**KOLKATA, 6 APRIL**

Devotees participate in a procession ahead of Ram Navami festival, in Howrah district, West Bengal PHOTO: PTI

Week-long Ram Navami celebrations began across West Bengal on Sunday morning with vibrant processions and chants of 'Jai Shri Ram', as devotees thronged the streets to soak in the religious fervour, amid heightened security in the state.

Saffron flags, devotional music and tableaux depicting scenes from the Ramayana enhanced the grandeur of the celebrations. Over 60 rallies will be held in Kolkata, prompting the deployment of over 4,000 police personnel

Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari laid the foundation stone of a Ram Mandir in his Nandigram assembly constituency.

The RSS and its affiliates have targeted mobilising over three crore participants, with rallies planned in every block of the state.

BJP leader Locket Chatterjee on Sunday claimed that a Ram Navami rally led by her from New Townon the outskirts of Kolkata had been stopped by police. *—PTI*

## OVER 33% OF FOREST RIGHTS CLAIMS REJECTED

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

As of 31 January, 2023, India has received over 5.1 million claims under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), with more than a third being rejected, according to data from the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs. Chhattisgarh leads in both claims received, at 941,000, and rejected claims exceeding 400,000. Other states with significant claims include Odisha, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra, which together account for over 66 per cent of total claims.

Overall, 43.57 lakh claims have been processed, representing an 85.38 per cent disposal rate, yet less than half—approximately 24.98 lakh—have resulted in title distribution. Criticism of the implementation of the FRA highlights numerous wrongful rejections, with policy experts and activists calling for improvements in the review processes. While some states like Odisha and Kerala have high title distribution rates, others, such as Karnataka and Bihar, show alarmingly low rates, hovering just above 5 per cent. Concurrently, the Union Environment Ministry reported significant forest encroachments, fueling concerns over the treatment of tribal. *—PTI*

# Generational shift ongoing in Cong: Pilot

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Sachin Pilot PHOTO: PTI

Ahead of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) session in Ahmedabad, Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot on Sunday said a generational shift was underway in the party with young leaders living up to the tasks entrusted to them.

Accountability and strengthening of ideology would be the watchwords for AICC now.

This significant session comes at a time when focus is on reviving, strengthening and restoring the party's past glory in Gujarat.

The former Union minister also asserted that while the party has lost in some state polls after the Lok Sabha polls, it retains its conviction and vigour to fight on.

The party is committed to strengthen the backwards, young people, women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minorities, whose representation is crucial.

"The (generational) shift is happening automatically. Many young people are taking on leadership roles whether it is within Parliament, states or outside," Pilot said.

Congress will focus on reforms, filling up of vacant posts and ensuring the party sticks to the Udaipur declaration by giving young people more political power.

The session in Ahmedabad , on 9 April. is set to host over 1,700 members. *—PTI*

# India sends more aid to Myanmar quake victims

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

India has sent 31 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Myanmar, including essential supplies for an Indian army field hospital unit, following a devastating 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck on 28 March. The assistance was airlifted in a C-17 Globemaster aircraft from Hindon air force station in Ghaziabad.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced the mission, dubbed 'Operation Brahma', on social media, sharing images of the aid being loaded. The quake has resulted in over 3,000 fatalities as rescue operations continue.

A field hospital staffed by 118 Indian Army personnel was deployed on 29 March following the disaster, and is currently operational in Mandalay. Meanwhile, the Indian Navy has contributed to relief efforts by delivering 442 tonnes of supplies. *—PTI*

## MA BABY ELECTED CPI(M) GENERAL SECY

**MADURAI, 6 APRIL**

Former Kerala minister MA Baby has been elected as the new General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) during the 24th party congress held here on Sunday. Some party leaders had rallied behind Ashok Dhawale, president of the All India Kisan Sabha, for the position.

Born in Prakkulam, Kerala, in 1954 to PM Alexander and Lilly Alexander, Baby's political journey began during his school days with the Kerala Students Federation, a precursor to the Students Federation of India. He served as a member of the Rajya Sabha from 1986 to 1998 and has been a member of the Politburo since 2012.

Shortly after being elected, he admitted that there were rifts in the INDIA bloc. *—PTI*

# No rift in INDIA bloc, says Bihar Cong chief

**PATNA, 6 APRIL**

Bihar Congress chief Rajesh Kumar on Sunday met Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav and dismissed speculations of discord within the INDIA bloc ahead of the state polls later this year.

Ahead of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's visit to the state, Kumar accompanied by Congress Legislature Party leader Shakil Ahmed Khan met with the Leader of the Opposition for the first time since assuming the role of state Congress chief.

Kumar said it was a formal meeting with Yadav and such meetings with all constituents of the INDIA bloc would be held regularly ahead of the upcoming assembly polls and expressed their common resolve to fight elections collectively to defeat the NDA.

Asked about the chief ministerial face of the INDIA bloc for Bihar elections, Khan said, "Tejashwi Yadav is the Leader of the Opposition in the assembly.

He represents all opposition parties and will continue to do so even outside the assembly with the support of all constituents of the Mahagathbandhan."

Khan criticised NDA leaders and JD(U), particularly over the controversial Waqf (Amendment) Bill, recently passed by Parliament. "BJP leaders are speaking the language of General Dyer on this issue," he said adding the people would never forgive JD(U) supremo Nitish Kumar for his support to the bill. *—PTI*

**AFTER 130 DAYS**

# *Farmer leader Dallewal ends hunger strike*

**CHANDIGARH, 6 APRIL**

Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal speaks with the media after ending his hunger strike, in Fatehgarh Sahib district, Punjab on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal on Sunday ended his hunger strike which he had started on 26 November last year to press for various demands of agitating farmers including a legal guarantee on the minimum support price for crops. However, he asserted that their fight continues.

The announcement came a day after Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu appealed to him to end his fast-unto-death.

Dallewal announced that he was ending his indefinite fast at a 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' organised at the grain market in Sirhind in Fatehgarh Sahib district of Punjab.

"You all have asked me to end the fast. For me people are a form of God. I am indebted to you for looking after the agitation," said Dallewal, who addressed the gathering from a stretcher. "The 'morcha' (agitation) continues. Even today I do not want to end the fast but you have asked me time and again and I respect it."

"The government is alert and it knows farmers can fight," he said.

The development comes more than a fortnight after Punjab police cracked down on agitating farmers, detaining their leaders in Mohali when they were returning from a meeting with a Central delegation led by Agriculture Minister Chouhan in Chandigarh.

Dallewal is a senior leader of a joint forum of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM), which were spearheading the agitation at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points.

Dallewal, who is the president of Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta Sidhupur), hails from Dallewal village in Faridkot. Be it inadequate compensation for the acquisition of farmland, pending payment of farmers or cases of farmers' suicides, Dallewal has been at the forefront of raising these issues.

He had earlier gone on hunger strikes in March 2018, January 2019, January 2021, November 2022 and June 2023. *—PTI*

# 'Lack offshore campuses from global varsities'

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Digvijay Singh PHOTO: ANI

A Parliamentary panel has highlighted that India has not yet established a campus from any leading global universities, including prestigious Ivy League institutions. The report, tabled in the Rajya Sabha by Congress MP Digvijay Singh, urged the Department of Higher Education to actively pursue partnerships with these renowned universities.

The report acknowledges a rising trend of foreign universities setting up campuses in India, driven by the nation's large student market and government initiatives. However, it notes the absence of US institutions, specifically Ivy League schools like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, among others.

Recent developments include UK's Southampton University planning to establish a campus in India, alongside Australian universities Deakin and Wollongong, both already operating in Gujarat's GIFT City.

"The Committee recommends that the Department of Higher Education should make efforts to enable greater access to the best of global resources for students," the report said.

It underscored the importance of enriching India's education landscape to provide students with access to top-tier global resources. *—PTI*

## UP to face intense heatwaves, temp to soar up to 45°C

**LUCKNOW, 6 APRIL**

Uttar Pradesh is expecting a sweltering summer with above-normal temperatures and intense heatwaves from April to June. The Bundelkhand region will bear the brunt, posing significant risks to human and animal health. Daytime temperatures will consistently exceed 40°C, potentially surpassing 45°C, while nighttime temperatures will remain high, between 35°C to 40°C. Medical professionals warn that heatwaves pose a greater health risk than high temperatures alone, causing dehydration and potential health complications. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

## GPS-tagged bar-headed geese migrate to Tibet

**PATNA, 6 APRIL**

Two bar-headed geese tagged with solar-powered GPS-GSM transmitters at Bihar's Nagi Dam Bird Sanctuary have successfully reached wetlands in Tibet, completing a month-long migration. Named Gagan and Vayu, the geese were tracked as part of a pioneering study by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), marking the first such effort in Bihar using advanced tracking technology. The birds are now in separate regions—Gagan in Nagarzê County near Yamzhog Yumco Lake, and Vayu in South Tibet. The data will offer crucial insights into their migratory routes, stopovers, and behaviour, supporting wetland conservation efforts along the Central Asian Flyway. The Nagi Dam Bird Sanctuary, a 200-hectare wetland in Jamui district, is a vital wintering ground for migratory birds from the Himalayas, Europe, and beyond. *—PTI*

## Artist Sudarshan Pattnaik wins Sand Master Award in UK

**LONDON, 6 APRIL**

Sudarsan Pattnaik, a world-renowned sand artist, has been awarded the prestigious Fred Darrington Sand Master Award for his outstanding contributions to the field. The award was presented to him at the Sandworld 2025 International Sand Art Festival in Weymouth, UK. Pattnaik is the first Indian artist to receive this esteemed award, which coincides with the centenary of legendary British sand sculptor Fred Darrington. His 10-foot sand sculpture of Lord Ganesha, symbolising World Peace, was showcased at the festival. Pattnaik expressed his gratitude, saying he is honoured to receive the award. Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi congratulated Pattnaik on his achievement, praising his contribution to India's cultural heritage. Pattnaik is a Padma Shri awardee with over 65 international sand sculpture championships and festivals to his credit. *—PTI*

## Collegium moots Justice Arun Palli as J&K CJ

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

The Supreme Court Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, has recommended Justice Arun Palli as the new Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The recommendation was made during a meeting on 4 April, 2025. Justice Palli, currently a judge at the Punjab and Haryana High Court, was born on 18 September, 1964. He was designated as a Senior Advocate on 26 April, 2007, and elevated to the Bench on 28 December, 2013 and has been serving as a judge since then. The Collegium's decision is part of the ongoing appointments and transfers within the Indian judiciary. *—PTI*

# NHRC ORDERS PROBE AS MP QUACK KILLS 7

## The man posed as a popular doctor from the UK

**DAMOH, 6 APRIL**

Seven persons died allegedly after being treated by a fake cardiologist at a missionary hospital in Madhya Pradesh's Damoh district, prompting the NHRC to launch a probe into the matter.

A team of the National Human Rights Commission will camp in Damoh from 7 to 9 April to conduct an investigation into the matter, NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo said.

As per a complaint lodged by a local resident with the NHRC, Narendra Vikramaditya Yadav used the name 'Dr N John Camm', to portray himself as if he was educated and trained abroad. Professor John Camm is a famous cardiologist, currently in the United Kingdom.

A team of the National Human Rights Commission will camp in Damoh from 7 to 9 April to conduct the investigation **PHOTO: X**

Deepak Tiwari, a resident of Jabalpur Naka here, in his complaint alleged that between January and February this year, many people died due to the treatment by an ineligible and unauthorised doctor in the cardiology department of the Damoh's Mission Hospital.

The Mission Hospital authorities could not be contacted on the issue. "The investigation team of the National Human Rights Commission constituted on my orders to investigate the case will camp in Damoh from 7th April to 9th April and investigate. If any victim or any other person wants to provide information related to the case, they can meet the investigation team in Damoh," Kanoongo said on X.

The investigation team will examine the institution and persons mentioned in the complaint, including administrative officials, he added.

The complaint further claimed that Yadav has been in constant controversies in the past and does not stay at any place for long. The missionary hospital is covered under the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Yojana and hence, the complaint noted that government money has also been misused. *—PTI*

## Clash in UP over Ambedkar, Buddha statues

**SITAPUR, 6 APRIL**

Tensions erupted in Vibharapur village, Uttar Pradesh, after locals clashed with police during the removal of statues of BR Ambedkar and Lord Buddha from government land. The incident, which occurred on Saturday, resulted in injuries to at least eight police personnel due to stone-pelting by villagers. Five individuals have since been arrested in connection with the unrest.

The statues had been erected by villagers on a platform outside the Panchayat Bhawan on 11 March. Following complaints, local authorities issued a notice for their removal on 12 March, but villagers opposed the decision, and the statues remained.

The situation escalated during a grievance-redressal event (Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas) on Saturday, prompting Maholi Sub-Divisional Magistrate Shashibind Dwivedi and Circle Officer Vishal Gupta to lead a team to execute the removal with a bulldozer. While the operation commenced without incident, tensions flared as the team was departing, leading villagers to hurl stones, resulting in injuries and damage to police vehicles.

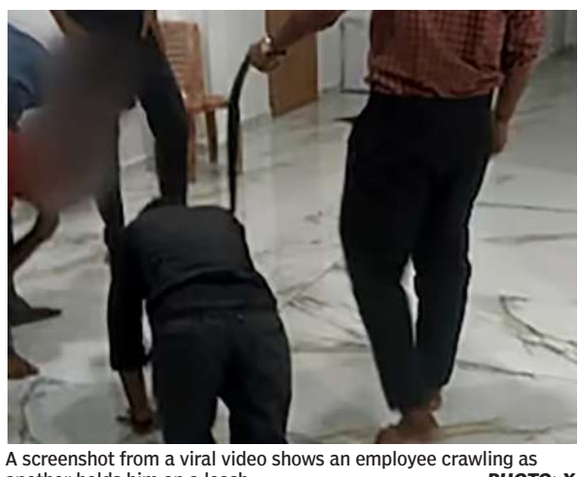
Additional Superintendent of Police (South) Praveen Ranjan confirmed that the police used mild force to control the crowd and that efforts are underway to apprehend other suspects involved in the clash.

Eight cops were injured in stone-pelting by villagers **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

To maintain order, a significant police presence has been established in the village. Ranjan stated that the situation has since stabilised. *—PTI*

## CHAINED LIKE DOGS

## Kerala firm accused of physically torturing 'under-performers'



A screenshot from a viral video shows an employee crawling as another holds him on a leash **PHOTO: X**

**KOCHI, 6 APRIL**

A private marketing firm was been accused of subjecting its "underperforming" employees to degrading treatment, including making them walk on their knees like chained dogs and lick coins from the floor.

Soon after its disturbing visuals were aired by local TV channels on Saturday, the state Labour department ordered a probe into the alleged inhuman workplace harassment. Police and the Labour Department also launched separate investigations to ensure the authenticity of the visuals.

Some persons who claimed to be employees of the firm, told a TV channel that those who fail to achieve targets were subjected to such punishments by the management.

However, in a twist, the man purportedly shown in the visuals, told the media later that the footage was misleading.

"I am still working in the firm... These visuals were from some months ago forcefully taken by a person who was working as the manager of the institution then. He was later asked to quit by the management and he is now using the visuals to tarnish the owner of the firm," he claimed.

He also reportedly gave the same statement to police and the labour department officials.

Labour Minister Sivankutty termed the visuals "shocking and disturbing" and said it cannot be accepted at any cost. The State Human Rights Commission registered a case into the incident based on a complaint by High Court lawyer Kulathoor Jaisingh. Meanwhile, the Kerala State Youth Commission also intervened and registered a case on its own into the alleged harassment incident. *—PTI*

## RAM NAVAMI FERVOUR

A Ram Navami procession in Bankura, West Bengal, on Sunday. (Extreme right) Designed by Indian scientists, the Surya Tilak ceremony is an annual event where a mirror-and-lens–based apparatus designed by Indian scientists are used to ensure that a beam of sunlight, resembling a tilak, falls directly on the forehead of the idol at Ram Lalla statue in Ayodhya Ram Temple **PHOTO: PTI**

## Judge in Malegaon blast case transferred

**MUMBAI, 6 APRIL**

Judge AK Lahoti, presiding over the 2008 Malegaon blast case, has been transferred to Nashik following the annual general transfer of district judges by the Bombay High Court. This decision comes just as the court was likely to reserve the matter for judgment. The transfer order takes effect on 9 June, after the courts reopen from the summer recess.

Victims of the blast have expressed concerns that Judge Lahoti's transfer will further delay justice and plan to approach the Bombay High Court to request an extension of his tenure until the judgment is delivered. This marks the fifth judge transfer in the 17-year-long case.

During recent proceedings, Judge Lahoti instructed both prosecution and defence to conclude their arguments by 15 April, with a ruling anticipated the following day. Advocate Shahid Nadeem, representing the victims, highlighted the ongoing delay in justice and the potential for further setbacks following the judge's transfer.

The case concerns the tragic events of 29 September 2008, when an explosive device on a motorcycle killed six people and injured over 100 near a mosque in Malegaon. Key accused, including BJP leader Pragya Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Purohit, are charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and the Indian Penal Code. *—PTI*

## UAPA slapped on 2 held in Beed mosque blast

**MUMBAI, 6 APRIL**

Authorities in Maharashtra's Beed district have invoked the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act alongside the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) as they investigate a blast at a local mosque. Two men, Vijay Rama Gavhane (22) and Shriram Ashok Sagde (24), were arrested in connection with the explosion that occurred on 30 March in Ardha Masla village during a procession on the eve of Eid.

Although no injuries were reported, the blast, caused by gelatin sticks, led to significant damage within the mosque. The initial police investigation registered charges under various BNS sections, such as 298 (injuring or defiling a place of worship), 299 (deliberate acts to outrage religious feelings), and 196 (promoting enmity). *—PTI*

## DAUGHTER SEEKS EUTHANASIA FOR FORMER JAILOR

**VARANASI, 6 APRIL**

A woman has petitioned President Droupadi Murmu for permission to undergo euthanasia, citing her mother's alleged harassment at the hands of senior officials. Neha Shah claims her mother, former deputy jailor Meena Kanojia, has faced sustained mental and physical abuse from Varanasi District Jail Superintendent Umesh Kumar Singh.

Shah said in her letter, "When you fight against those in power, your end is certain." Allegations against Singh include the use of caste-based slurs, public humiliation, and intimidation, particularly following a complaint made at the Lalpur Pandeypur Police Station.

Shah asserts that despite multiple harassment claims, Singh receives repeated clean chits from prison authorities.

The situation escalated with the emergence of explicit videos purportedly involving Singh's aide, Ashwani Pandey, reportedly showing acts of indecency in a jail office.

Shah warned, "If Umesh Singh is not suspended, he will destroy our entire family," adding that her mother might soon face repercussions for speaking out. She fears for their safety and believes her mother's career is on the line if they continue to challenge Singh's authority. *—PTI*

## KING OF THE NON-EXISTENT

## *How Nityananda's dream shattered again*

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

The life of the self-styled Godman Nityananda may be the stuff of sleazy fiction but the attempted land grab in Bolivia by his followers is quite real. The 'emissaries' of the self-acclaimed "King" of the non-existent Kingdom of Kailasa with its own Reserve Bank and currency tried to broker a deal with the indigenous tribes of Amazon to lease land, three times the size of New Delhi, for 1,000 years.

Followers of the 'United States of Kailasa' arrived on tourist visas and offered money and help to indigenous groups in the South American country to 'protect their territory'. Local leaders agreed to 25-year deal and to be paid $200,000 annually. Kailasa representatives who had even managed a photo op with the country's President Luis Arce, came back with a lease agreement for 1,000 years which included use of air space and extraction of natural resources.

The almost got away with the con, until local newspapers got a wind of it and conducted an investigation that exposed the alleged land grab.

Bolivian officials managed to arrest 20 followers but there was no evidence that Nithyananda joined them there. Indeed, it has been hard to find out where fugitive runs his religious syndicate.

Known as Arunachalam Rajasekaran, he became a Hindu monk after naming himself Nityananda and started his first ashram in his 20s near the tech hub of Bengaluru, claiming to be able to delay sunrise and help the blind see through a 'third eye'. The loquacious spin master built a network across the world promising to form "the world's first inter-life reincarnation trust management."

As accusations of rape and sexual assault piled up, Nityananda took flight and later on surfaced through his announcement in social media that he had founded a new country and its website said "free e-citizenship" for the newly founded Hindu Kingdom was just a few clicks away.

Its sovereign lands to revive Sanatana Dharma were "in the Ecuador islands" which its Government has denied. *—Agencies*

Nityananda **PHOTO: X**

## SIS secy in net for GIPE funds diversion in Pune

**PUNE, 6 APRIL**

- Authorities allege that Deshmukh diverted Rs 1.5 crore from GIPE for the acquisition of land intended for SIS, with the supposed misappropriation taking place during the 2022–23 financial year

Milind Deshmukh, secretary of the Servants of India Society (SIS), the governing body of the esteemed Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE), has been arrested on charges of cheating and misappropriating funds. His arrest occurred on Saturday following a complaint lodged by the deputy registrar of GIPE at the Deccan Gymkhana police station.

Authorities allege that Deshmukh diverted Rs 1.5 crore from GIPE for the acquisition of land intended for SIS, with the supposed misappropriation taking place during the 2022–23 financial year.

GIPE has been under scrutiny recently after Sanjeev Sanyal, Chancellor and member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, was dismissed by SIS due to concerns over the institution's "declining academic standards" and its 'B' grade from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Sanyal was reinstated just a day later.

In a letter to SIS president Damodar Sahoo, Sanyal highlighted ongoing controversies and accusations of financial misconduct at GIPE. *—PTI*

**A DEVASTATING AFTERMATH**

Children look at the destroyed house of journalist Islam Meqdad, where she was killed along with her son and five other family members in an Israeli army strike in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, on Sunday
***PHOTO: PTI***

# Studio Ghibli AI: A privacy nightmare in disguise

Cybersecurity experts caution that while these tools may appear harmless, the terms of services are often vague
***PHOTO: CHATGPT***

While netizens are hooked on the viral trend of transforming personal photos into Studio Ghibli-style art using AI tools, experts warn that the trend conceals a darker reality where casual sharing can lead to unforeseen privacy breaches and data misuse.

Cybersecurity experts caution that while these tools may appear harmless, the terms of services are often vague, raising questions about what happens to user photos after they are processed. The trend started when OpenAI launched its GPT-4o model, which allows users to recreate personal images in the artistic style of Studio Ghibli, a Japanese animation studio. Few of the many platforms say that they don't store the photos, or delete them after one-time use, but most of them don't clearly explain what "deletion" really means--whether it's instant, delayed, or partial.

Photos contain more than just facial data. They often include hidden metadata like location coordinates, timestamps, and device details-- all of which can quietly reveal personal information. These AI tools leverage neural style transfer (NST) algorithms, explains Quick Heal Technologies CEO Vishal Salvi. These algorithms separate content from artistic styles in uploaded photos to blend the user's image with reference artwork.

While the process appears harmless, vulnerabilities like model inversion attacks where adversaries may reconstruct original pictures from Ghibli images pose significant risks, he noted. "Even if companies claim they don't store your photos, fragments of your data might still end up in their systems. Uploaded images can definitely be repurposed for unintended uses, like training AI models for surveillance or advertising," Salvi cautioned. The way these tools are designed makes it easy to overlook what you're really agreeing to, McAfee's said Senior Director of Engineering, McAfee Pratim Mukherjee.

Eye-catching results, viral filters, and fast interactions create an experience that feels light--but often comes with hidden privacy risks. "When access to something as personal as a camera roll is granted without a second thought, it's not always accidental. These platforms are often built to encourage quick engagement while quietly collecting data in the background. "That's where the concern lies. Creativity becomes the hook, but what's being normalised is a pattern of data sharing that users don't fully understand. And when that data fuels monetisation, the line between fun and exploitation gets blurry," said Mukherjee.

The risk of data breaches looms large, with experts cautioning that stolen user photos could fuel deepfake creation and identity fraud. Vladislav Tushkanov, Group Manager at Kaspersky AI Technology Research Centre, says that while some companies do ensure the safety and security of the data they collect and store, it does not mean that the protection is bullet-proof. He said numerous accounts and hacker forums on the dark web offer stolen user account data for sale. "The hard part is, you can't change your face the way you can reset a password. Once a photo is out there, it's out there," Mukherjee warned.

Furthermore, many platforms bury data usage clauses in lengthy terms of service, making it difficult for users to understand how their data is being handled. "These policies are all buried within their terms of service. And that's the issue, those terms are often too vague or too long for most people to really understand. Just because someone clicks accept doesn't mean they're giving truly informed consent.

"If it's not clear how your image will be used, or whether it's deleted at all, it's worth asking if the fun is really worth the risk," said Mukherjee. Some countries have taken steps to require clearer disclosures, while some are still contemplating. To mitigate these risks, experts recommend that users exercise caution when sharing personal photos with AI apps.

Tushkanov advises users to "combine standard security practices with a bit of common sense," including using strong, unique passwords, enabling two-factor authentication, and being wary of potential phishing websites.

Salvi suggests using specialised tools to strip hidden metadata from photos before uploading them. On the policy front, he suggests that regulators mandate differential privacy certification and standardised audits to close compliance gaps.

Mukherjee calls for governments to mandate simplified, upfront disclosures regarding data usage. *—PTI*

SALAR ساہر

# Turkish protesters join forces amid govt crackown

The arrest of an opposition presidential candidate last month has triggered Turkiye's largest anti-government protests in more than a decade, uniting demonstrators from different walks of life and sometimes diametrically opposed political views.

It includes supporters of popular Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, and young people who see all politicians as ineffective. Protesters range from the socialist left to the ultra-nationalist right, and from university students to retirees. They are united by a sense that the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has grown increasingly authoritarian, diminishing the secular and democratic values and laws that the country was built upon. They are fueled by outrage at Imamoglu's arrest and the government's attempts to quell the ensuing protests.

The protests began after the government arrested Imamoglu, the man seen as posing the most serious electoral challenge to Erdogan in years, on 19 March. Prosecutors accuse him of corruption and aiding an outlawed Kurdish organization. Critics say the charges are an excuse to get a key rival out of the way, but the government denies interfering with the legal process. The largest protests have happened alongside rallies of Imamoglu's center-left pro-secularist Republican People's Party (CHP), but many young protesters said they don't support the party.

Ogulcan Akti, a 26-year-old university student working two part-time jobs to support his family, said both the opposition and the ruling party are "liars." "We don't trust anyone." In the days after the mayor's arrest, thousands of students converged near Istanbul city hall. Some waved Turkish flags; others held images of left-wing figures from the 1970s and sang a Turkish version of the Italian protest song "Bella ciao."

In images on social media, some protesters made the ultranationalist "grey wolf" hand sign, standing next to others showing the leftists' raised fist. Some showed the peace sign favored by both leftists and pro-Kurdish groups, while others chanted slogans attacking the banned militant Kurdistan Workers' Party.

One afternoon last week, dozens of students from Bogazici University gathered at a metro station in Istanbul, many wearing masks to avoid reprisals or arrest. More than 2,000 people, including journalists, have been detained since the protests began. Around 300 were formally arrested on charges including "joining an illegal protest" and "resisting the police," with some accused of "terrorism links." Lawyers for the arrested students say that the charge of "joining an illegal protest" does not justify extended detention, and that the number of arrests is "unusually high" compared to offenses such as terrorism or drugs.

At the metro station, 22-year-old management student Burak Turan and his girlfriend slipped into a mall, watching officers detain dozens of protesters. "We are here because so many students are getting arrested for no reason," Turan said. "They act like it's a war; they are exercising wartime laws." Turan refused to wear a mask, saying he had nothing to be ashamed of. Other protesters include public employees, artists and retirees, many of whom support the CHP. A man in his 60s watching a standoff at city hall said he was there to defend the rights of the younger generation. "We don't matter, they do. They are our future." he said. Mehtap Bozkurt, a 70-year-old pensioner and a CHP supporter, joined a protest outside Istanbul city hall. "This country is secular and will remain secular," she said.

Outside the courts in Istanbul, parents and relatives, some holding flowers, maintained an anxious vigil. Some hoped for a loved one's immediate release, while others were overcome with frustration. One family member, who asked to remain anonymous fearing reprisals from officials, told local media that the detained students had "studied day and night to get into the best universities." Another woman showed journalists a picture of her son with a black eye. "He told me, Mom, they beat me up,'" she said tearfully. Another woman said she was a cancer patient left waiting since dawn. "What did these kids do? Did they murder someone? What did they even do?"

Around 300 protesters spent Eid holiday in prison, separated from their families. A young female protester wearing a mask watched the standoff with police unfolding near city hall last week. "I am here today because I do not accept autocracy," she said. "Ekrem Imamoglu's arrest means that we accept that there will be no more elections in this country. I do not accept this." *—PTI*

More than 2,000 people, including journalists, have been detained since the protests began
***PHOTO: PTI***

**LETTERS** write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

# *Trump's budget cuts force foreign journalists to return to homelands*

Eleven journalists associated with the US-funded media outlets are behind bars overseas
***PHOTO: PTI***

After hiding in Thailand for seven years, two Cambodian journalists arrived in the US last year on work visas, aiming to keep providing people in their Southeast Asian homeland with objective, factual news through Radio Free Asia (RFA).

Vuthy Tha and Hour Hum now say their jobs and legal status in the US are at risk after President Donald Trump recently signed an executive order gutting the government-run US Agency for Global Media (USAGM). The agency funds RFA and other outlets tasked with delivering uncensored information to parts of the world under authoritarian rule and often without a free press of their own.

"It fell out of sky," Vuthy, a single father of two small children, said through a translator about the Trump administration's decision, which he says threatens to upend his life. "I am very regretful that our listeners cannot receive the accurate news," Hour said, also through a translator.

Both men said they're worried about providing for their families and being allowed to stay in the US. They say it's impossible to return to Cambodia, a single-party state hostile to independent media where they fear being persecuted for their journalistic work.

The administration has been dismantling or slashing the size of federal agencies, leading tens of thousands of government workers and contractors to be fired or put on leave. But the targeting of the USAGM, whose decades-old networks aim to extend American influence abroad, means journalists who have defied authoritarian regimes to help fulfill a US mission of delivering pro-democracy programming could be deported and face harassment and persecution in their homelands.

Eleven journalists associated with the US-funded media outlets are behind bars overseas, including RFA's Shin Daewe, who is serving 15 years in Myanmar on a charge of supporting terrorism. At least 84 USAGM, journalists in the United States on work visas could face deportation, including at least 23 "at serious risk of being immediately arrested upon arrival and potentially imprisoned," according to the advocacy group Reporters Without Borders and a coalition of 36 human rights organisations.

"It is outrageous that these journalists, who risk their lives to expose the extent of repression in their home countries, might be completely abandoned," said Thibaut Bruttin, director general of Reporters Without Borders.

"The US Congress must take responsibility for protecting these reporters and all USAGM-funded outlets, funded by Congress itself," Bruttin said. "This responsibility is not just moral — it stems from the United States' commitment to defending the principles of democracy and press freedom." The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee did not respond to requests for comment. The White House did not comment.

The State Department said it is coordinating with USAGM on imprisoned journalists and that it condemns unjust detentions of journalists for exercising their freedom of expression. A number of journalists for Voice of America, a news service also overseen by USAGM, have sued in a federal court. That includes two unnamed foreign journalists on temporary visas. If deported, one could risk imprisonment for 10 years for his work for VOA, and the other, a member of a persecuted minority in his home country, could be in "physical danger," the lawsuit said. The court has temporarily halted contract terminations, preventing the visa holders from being forced to leave for now. Both RFA and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, another USAGM-funded media outlet, also have sued seeking restoration of funding.

Trump's cuts come after the US last year helped free Alsu Kurmasheva — a dual US-Russian citizen and journalist with RFE/RL — in a high-profile prisoner swap that included Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich. In February, the Trump administration announced the release of Andrey Kuznechyk, a Belarusian journalist with RFE/RL's Belarus service. The network still has four journalists jailed — one each in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Russia-occupied Crimea.

Voice of America has a contributor jailed in Myanmar and another in Vietnam, said Jessica Jerreat, VOA's press freedom editor. In Vietnam, four RFA reporters are in jail and another is under house arrest, according to Tamara Bralo, the outlet's head of journalist security. She said she's concerned that American support in seeking their release could diminish if RFA folds. Vietnam consistently ranks near the bottom in the Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders, which says about 40 journalists are held in Vietnam's prisons where mistreatment is widespread.

Khoa Lai, a Vietnamese journalist who joined RFA in Washington on a work visa only days before Trump took office, said returning to Vietnam is risky for him. "I could face prosecution or be in prison," said Lai, who produces video stories on freedom of speech, freedom of religion and political corruption for RFA's Vietnamese service. "I don't know for sure, but it won't be good."

In neighbouring Thailand as refugees, both continued to report for RFA, but with their identities hidden. They still risked getting sent back to Cambodia until RFA brought them to the US on work visas last year. They have reported on issues ranging from politics, corruption and human rights to climate change and environment.

Vuthy says he's still hopeful that RFA might survive, adding that it "is fighting for its existence." *—PTI*

## Trump to meet Netanyahu over Gaza, tariffs

**FLORIDA, 6 APRIL**

US President Trump will meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on 7 April in what would be their second White House sit-down since Trump's return to office. The visit comes as Israel deploys troops in a new security corridor across Gaza to pressure Hamas. The tariff issue, efforts to return Israeli hostages, Israel-Turkey relations, Iranian threat and the battle against the International Criminal Court would feature in the discussions. Israel faces a 17 per cent tariff. Last month, Israel shattered the ceasefire with a surprise bombardment in Gaza after trying to pressure Hamas to accept new terms, a move supported by the White House. Hundreds of Palestinians have since been killed. *—PTI*

## Storms rage from Texas to Ohio, 16 killed

**DYERSBURG, 6 APRIL**

Additional downpours have come for parts of the South and Midwest, already heavily waterlogged by severe storms that also spawned deadly tornadoes. Rivers in some places continue to rise for days. Rains pounded the central US, prompting a series of emergencies from Texas to Ohio. Weathermen cited possible flooding of critical infrastructure across multiple states. At least 16 people, including 10 in Tennessee have been killed. On 4 April floods claimed one life in Missouri, two in Kentucky and one in Arkansas. Tornadoes destroyed entire neighborhoods, killing at least seven. Interstate commerce is affected as extreme flooding across a corridor that includes major cargo hubs in Louisville, Kentucky and Memphis could cause shipping and supply chain delays. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

## Pilot dies in helicopter crash in South Korea

**SEOUL, 6 APRIL**

A helicopter crashed during an operation to extinguish a fire in southeastern South Korea on Sunday, killing its pilot, the local fire agency said. A local fire office said that the fire at a hill in the city of Daegu had been put out about one hour after it had broken out. The identity of the pilot and the cause of the crash weren't immediately known. The southeastern regions in South Korea suffered the worst-ever wildfires on record last month. Multiple blazes driven by strong winds and dry weather razed vast swaths of land and killed 31 people, including the pilot whose helicopter crashed during efforts to contain one of the wildfires. *—PTI*

## European team to enhance Pak's airport security

**ISLAMABAD, 6 APRIL**

A European Civil Aviation team will visit Pakistan next week to provide specialised training to enhance airport security. The sessions will focus on meeting international standards, particularly in the areas of Explosives Trace Detection (ETD) and Explosive Detection Dogs (EDD). A Civil Aviation Authority spokesperson confirmed that the initiative aims to align Pakistan's aviation security protocols with globally recognised benchmarks, enhancing overall airport safety. Last year the European Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency officially lifted the suspension on Pakistan International Airlines from flying to Europe over security concerns. They also permitted private Pakistani airline Airblue to operate flights to Europe. The development restored direct air links between Pakistan and European destinations. *—PTI*

Protests erupt across the US, from New York to Boston. The Hands Off movement was organised by over 160 groups against the President Donald Trump and billionaire Elon Musk's actions on government downsizing, the economy, scale back protections to transgenders, social security, immigration and human rights. ***PHOTO: X***

# Protests against Trump, Musk rock the US

### The 'Hands Off' movement was organised in 1,200 locations in all 50 states; no arrests

**WASHINGTON, 6 APRIL**

Crowds of people angry about the way President Donald Trump is running the country marched in all American cities on Saturday. This was the biggest day of demonstrations yet by an opposition movement trying to regain its momentum after the shock of the Republican's first weeks in office.

Named "Hands Off!", demonstrations were organised for more than 1,200 locations in all 50 states by more than 150 groups, including civil rights organisations, labour unions, LBGTQ+ advocates, veterans and elections activists. The rallies appeared peaceful, with no reports of arrests.

Thousands of protesters in cities dotting the nation from Midtown Manhattan to Anchorage, Alaska, including at multiple state capitols, assailed Trump and billionaire Elon Musk's actions on government downsizing, the economy, scale back protections to transgenders, social security, immigration and human rights.

Asked about the protests, the White House said in a statement that "President Trump's position is clear: he will always protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid for eligible beneficiaries. Meanwhile, the Democrats' stance is giving Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare benefits to illegal aliens, which will bankrupt these programs."

On the West Coast, in the shadow of Seattle's iconic Space Needle, protesters held signs with slogans like "Fight the oligarchy."

Protesters chanted as they took to the streets in Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles, where they marched from Pershing Square to City Hall. Kelley Robinson, president of the Human Rights Campaign advocacy group, criticised the administration's treatment of the LBGTQ+ community at the rally at the National Mall in Washington DC, where Democratic members of Congress also took the stage.

Hundreds of people also demonstrated in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, a few miles from Trump's golf course in Jupiter. In Boston, demonstrators brandished signs such as "Hands off our democracy".

Meanwhile Columbia University spokesperson said it had appointed 36 new special patrol officers by the New York Police Department to patrol the premises in the wake of students protests in the campus. *—PTI*

## Musk pitches for zero tariffs for EU

Billionaire Elon Musk and advisor to US President Donal Trump told Italy's far right, anti-immigrant League party leader Matteo Salvini on Saturday that he hoped in the future the US and Europe could create "a very close, stronger partnership" and reach a "zero-tariff zone." Musk spoke to Salvini in a video conference during the League's congress in Florence. He said that, ideally, there will be a "zero-tariff zone in the future with a free trade zone between Europe and North America."

Elon Musk ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

## US cancels visa of S Sudan citizens

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday said that the United States has decided to revoke all visas held by South Sudanese passport holders, as he accused the African nation's government of "taking advantage of the United States". In a statement, Rubio said, "Every country must accept the return of its citizens in a timely manner when another country, including the United States, seeks to remove them." Marco added that South Sudan's transitional government "failed to respect this principle".

Marco Rubio ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

## Iran says it's 'meaningless' talking to Trump on nuclear programme

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Sunday rejected direct negotiations with the United States as "meaningless", after US President Donald Trump said he would prefer direct talks with the Islamic Republic.

Trump had called last month on Tehran to hold negotiations on its nuclear programme with Washington, but threatened to bomb Iran if diplomacy fails.

On Thursday, the US president said he would prefer to hold "direct talks" with Iran. "I think it goes faster and you understand the other side a lot better than if you go through intermediaries," he argued.

But on Sunday, Araghchi said "direct negotiations would be meaningless with a party that constantly threatens to resort to force in violation of the UN Charter and that expresses contradictory positions from its various officials. Iran keeps itself prepared for all possible or probable events, and just as it is serious in diplomacy and negotiations, it will also be decisive and serious in defending its national interests and sovereignty," Araghchi said.

Abbas Araghchi ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

## Starmer to declare 'end of globalisation' after Trump tariff

**LONDON, 6 APRIL**

The United Kingdom's Prime Minister Keir Starmer is scheduled to declare the end of the era of globalisation following US President Donald Trump's hardline reciprocal tariffs and 'America First' policy that triggered a global trade war pushing markets into the shadows of uncertainty, according to a report.

In his address to the nation on Monday, the British Premier is also likely to admit that globalization, which started after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, has "failed" millions of voters and acknowledge why Trump's economic nationalism is popular among his supporters who believe they have seen no benefits from free trade and mass immigration, sources say.

Earlier writing in 'The Sunday Telegraph' he vowed to protect UK businesses from the tariff war, and that nobody wins from a trade war. Calling for calm as the UK fights for the best trade deal, he reiterated that "all options remain on the table" as he indicated the possibility of state intervention to protect businesses.

"We stand ready to use industrial policy to help shelter British business from the storm. Some people may feel uncomfortable about this – the idea the state should intervene directly to shape the market has often been derided. But we simply cannot cling on to old sentiments when the world is turning this fast," he added.

His intervention comes following days of turmoil in the stock markets, with the UK among the nations hit with a 10 per cent "baseline" import duty by Trump and 25 per cent tariff on UK car exports, steel and aluminium products. Tata Motors-owned British carmaker Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) confirmed a pause in its American shipments. *—PTI*

## Israel denies entry to two UK MPs

**LONDON, 6 APRIL**

Two British MPs on a parliamentary delegation to Israel have been detained and refused entry by authorities in the country, Foreign Secretary David Lammy has said, describing the Israeli action as "unacceptable, counterproductive and deeply concerning".

While UK Foreign office confirmed Abtisam Mohamed and Yuan Yang were a part of Parliamentary delegation, Israeli Government said it refused entry because they intended to spread "hateful rhetoric" against Israel, the Israeli population and immigration authority said in a statement reported by Israeli media.

"It is unacceptable, counterproductive, and deeply concerning that two British MPs on a parliamentary delegation to Israel have been detained and refused entry by the Israeli authorities," Lammy said, adding the foreign office had been in touch with both MPs to offer support.

Yang, is the first Chinese born British MP and Mohamed, Yemen born Arab MP for Sheffield Central flew to the country from Luton airport on Saturday with two aides, according to reports but were denied entry. *—PTI*

Yuan Yang and Abtisam Mohamed, the UK MPs who were denied entry into Israel ***PHOTO: X***

## Autopsy says Palestinian teen died of starvation in Israeli prison

**TEL AVIV, 6 APRIL**

Starvation appears to be the primary cause of death for Palestinian teenager Walid Ahmad, who died in an Israeli prison, according to Dr. Daniel Solomon, an Israeli doctor who observed his autopsy.

The seventeen-year-old, held for six months without charge, suffered extreme malnutrition, colon inflammation, and scabies, as detailed in Dr. Solomon's report obtained by the Associated Press from Ahmad's family.

Ahmad died last month after collapsing in Megiddo Prison. Palestinian officials allege he struck his head, while the Israeli prison service has appointed a team to investigate his death.

Rights groups have documented systemic abuse in Israeli prisons, where thousands of Palestinians are currently detained.

Conditions have deteriorated significantly since the outbreak of the recent Gaza conflict, with reports of overcrowding, insufficient medical care, and poor sanitation. Ahmad's family claims he experienced severe health issues prior to his death, attributed to inadequate food and unclean water. Dr. Lina Qasem Hassan, who reviewed the findings, indicated a pattern of medical neglect.

Ahmad's family is seeking his body for burial, lamenting the tragic realities faced by prisoners and asserting that lives in Israeli facilities lack value. The family is yet to receive a death certificate. *—PTI*

## US airstrikes kill 2 in Yemen; Trump claims toll higher

**DUBAI, 6 APRIL**

Suspected US airstrikes killed at least two people overnight in a stronghold of Yemen's Houthi rebels, as a bombing video posted by US President Trump suggested casualties in the campaign may be higher.

The strikes in Saada killed two people and wounded four others, with footage aired by the Houthis' al-Masirah news channel showing a strike collapsing a two-story building.

However, the Houthis have not acknowledged any casualties from their military or leadership forces. *—PTI*

**US STILL ABSENT**

## *UN urges relief in Myanmar as death toll rises*

**BANGKOK, 6 APRIL**

The death toll from last week's massive earthquake in Myanmar rose to 3,455, state media said Saturday, as UN agencies and foreign aid donors ramped up their emergency relief efforts.

The 7.7 magnitude quake the country, and worsened an already dire humanitarian crisis triggered by the country's civil war. Members of the UN Security Council in statement said there was a need strengthen rescue, relief and recovery efforts and to scale up immediate and rapid humanitarian assistance to help the people of Myanmar," its president, Jérôme Bonnafont of France, said in a press statement Friday and called for a "safe and conducive environment to ensure the timely and effective delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to all those in need, without disruption or discrimination".

The death toll from the 7.7 magnitude earthquake in Myanmar rose to 3,455 ***PHOTO: PTI***

Meanwhile, describing India and China as rich countries, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said while America is willing to continue to help those affected by the Myanmar earthquake, other countries should also pitch in to provide humanitarian assistance during such crises worldwide. "Well, we're not the government of the world. No, we will provide humanitarian assistance just like everybody else does and do it the best we can. But we also have other needs we have to balance that against. We're not walking away from humanitarian assistance," Rubio told the media at NATO Headquarters in Brussels on Friday.

India, a first responder in times of crises, delivered the first tranche of humanitarian aid and disaster relief material, including 15 tonnes of supplies such as tents, blankets, essential medicines, and food, through its National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). *—PTI*

## Zelenskyy meets European leaders on peacekeeping force

**KYIV, 6 APRIL**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy convened with British and French military leaders in Kyiv on Saturday to discuss the potential deployment of a multinational peacekeeping force to Ukraine, despite US President Donald Trump's reluctance to provide guarantees. The UK is advocating for a European-led peacekeeping initiative, emphasising that it would require US backing against possible Russian reprisals.

The discussions come as the death toll from a Russian missile strike in Kryvyi Rih rose to 19, including several children. In a grim development, another Russian attack in Kyiv resulted in one death and three injuries. Zelenskyy underscored the need for increased international pressure on Moscow, stating that recent assaults showed Russia's intent to continue the conflict.

Zelenskyy ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

Mayor Vitali Klitschko reported damage to several buildings and vehicles in the Kyiv strike, which occurred in the Darnytskyi district. Oleksandr Vilkul, head of Kryvyi Rih's military administration, declared three days of mourning for the victims of the missile attack, which damaged numerous apartment blocks.

The Ukrainian air force reported that over the past week, Russia launched more than 1,400 aerial bombs and 670 drones. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

## GeM facilitates over Rs 38,500 cr transactions

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Government e-marketplace (GeM) has enabled over Rs 38,500 crore in transactions for more than 30,000 start-ups, reinforcing its position as a true catalyst in India's innovation ecosystem, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said on Sunday. GeM is a company established under the administrative control of Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, for procuring goods and services by central ministries, State Departments, PSEs, and Autonomous Bodies. In India, GeM has emerged as a game-changer in public procurement, creating an open and inclusive platform that benefits not just government buyers but also local entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses. GeM has enabled startups to fulfil orders transparently. *—ANI*

## In Q1 FY25, Jubilant Foods reports 34% revenue surge

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Jubilant Foods Ltd (JFL) has announced 34 per cent increase in consolidated revenue from operations, reaching Rs 2,107 crore for March 2025 quarter. For fiscal 2025, revenue rose by 44 per cent to Rs 8,145.5 crore, significantly influenced by recent acquisition of controlling stake in DP Eurasia NV, the master franchisee for Domino's Pizza in Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. JFL's revenue surged by 19.1 per cent to Rs 1,587.2 crore for the quarter and 14.3 per cent to Rs 6,104.7 crore for the fiscal year. The Bhartia family-promoted company operates over 3,000 Domino's stores worldwide and added 56 new stores in the quarter. Domino's India opened 52 new outlets, contributing to its status as the second largest global network for the brand. *—PTI*

## Tesla entry will boost EV market in India: BMW

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

The BMW Group India is unfazed by the prospect of Tesla entering electric vehicle market here and feels it will help grow the segment, said its Managing Director and CEO Vikram Pawah. The group has already sold 646 units in the first quarter of 2025 and is keeping its forecast of 15 per cent of its total sales in India coming from EVs, Pawah said. When asked about competition from the American electric car maker, Pawah said, "In all the markets in the world, we coexist. We all coexist and you can see last year figures worldwide, we were the ones who were growing. We grew in electric sales worldwide." Not many manufacturers can talk about growth in electric vehicles, he said. *—PTI*

## By FY26 Amul's total revenue may rise more than 10%

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

India's leading dairy brand Amul's revenue is expected to rise more than 10 per cent to about Rs 1 lakh crore this fiscal due to rising consumer demand for milk and its products. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF) sells dairy products under the 'Amul' brand. Besides, its 18 district cooperative milk producer's unions sell on their own in local district markets. In an interview with PTI, GCMMF Managing Director Jayen Mehta said the total revenue of the Amul brand is likely to touch Rs 1 lakh crore in 2025-26 fiscal against around Rs 90,000 crore in the previous year. The turnover from direct marketing of Amul products by 18 member unions will be around Rs 25,000 crore this fiscal. GCMMF turnover stood at around 59,250 crore in 2023-24. *—PTI*

# RBI likely to cut rate by 25 bps this week: Experts

### There is need to push growth amid US tariffs

**MUMBAI, 6 APRIL**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is likely to cut key interest rates again by up to 25 basis points this week, as lower inflation provides support for an accommodative monetary policy stance, and there is a pressing need to stimulate growth at a time when the reciprocal tariffs announced by the US is posing a challenge to the global economy.

In February, the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee, headed by Governor Sanjay Malhotra, slashed the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent. It was the first reduction since May 2020 and the first revision after two-and-a-half years.

The 54th meeting of the MPC, the rate-setting panel, is scheduled to start deliberations on 7 April, and the decision will be announced on 9 April.

RBI has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent since February 2023. The last time the RBI reduced the rate was during the Covid times (May 2020), and thereafter, it was gradually raised to 6.5 per cent.

Sanjay Malhotra PHOTO: ANI

- RBI has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent since February 2023. The last time the RBI reduced the rate was during the Covid times and thereafter, it was gradually raised

Bank of Baroda Chief Economist Madan Sabnavis said the credit policy to be announced this week will come at a time when several things are happening around the world and within the economy.

The new round of tariffs imposed by the US would have some impact on growth prospects and the currency which is something that the MPC will have to consider beyond the normal assessment of the state of the economy, he said.

"While it does look like conditions are rather clear for another 25 bps cut in repo rate this time with the inflation prospects being benign and liquidity having settled down, it is also expected that the stance will change to accommodative, meaning... that there could be more rate cuts in the offing during the course of the year," Sabnavis said. *–PTI*

# Tariffs may slow down growth in US: Fitch

Tariff hikes will result in higher consumer prices and lower corporate profits in the US PHOTO: PTI

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Reciprocal tariffs imposed by the US significantly raise risks for a recession in the US and constrain the US Federal Reserve's ability to lower interest rates further, Fitch Ratings said.

After the US administration imposed higher tariffs, the rating agency projected that US growth in 2025 is likely to be slower than the 1.7 per cent that it had projected in March.

According to Fitch Ratings, tariff hikes will result in higher consumer prices and lower corporate profits in the US. "Higher prices will squeeze real wages, weighing on consumer spending, while lower profits and policy uncertainty will act as a drag on business investment," Fitch said.

"Upward pressure on goods prices from tariffs means the Fed is likely to become more cautious about further rate cuts in the near term."

Fitch expects these effects will likely outweigh the benefits US companies might gain from increased protection against foreign competition.

- "Upward pressure on goods prices from tariffs means the Fed is likely to become more cautious about further rate cuts in the near term."

It further added that the broad-based nature of the tariff hikes constrains the scope for trade diversion, underlining the likelihood that the trade war will have adverse effects all round.

Since assuming office for his second term, President Trump has reiterated his stance on tariff reciprocity, emphasising that the United States will match tariffs imposed by other countries, including India, to ensure fair trade.

On April 2, the US President issued an executive order on reciprocal tariffs, imposing additional 10–50 per cent ad valorem duties on imports from all trading partners. *—ANI*

### US tariffs worry Indian seafood trade

Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) president G Pawan Kumar on Sunday said the reciprocal tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump will impact Indian seafood exports to the US market, which stood at USD 2.5B in 2023–24. Of the total exports, shrimps accounted for 92 per cent – India is the largest supplier of shrimps to the US, Kumar said. "This tariff will hurt all stakeholders in the value chain and cause all round distress," Kumar said. The county will falter in export performance as Ecuador is levied only a 10 per cent tariff, it is believed. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

### US tariffs may trigger dumping in India: CareEdge

The imposition of high reciprocal tariffs by the US on other competing nations raises the possibility of increased dumping by those nations in India, as well as in other export markets, which could negatively impact certain sectors, CareEdge Ratings said. CareEdge report Sectoral Impact of US Reciprocal Tariff: Neutral to Negative said the expected direct impact of US reciprocal tariffs would vary, with no impact expected on pharmaceuticals since they are exempt from reciprocal tariffs. *—ANI*

# Mcap of 9 firms erodes Rs 2.9L cr

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms eroded by Rs 2,94,170.16 crore in the holiday-shortened last week, with Tata Consultancy Services taking the biggest hit amid a bearish trend in domestic equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark gauge Sensex tanked 2,050.23 points or 2.64 per cent, while the NSE Nifty declined 614.8 points or 2.61 per cent.

From the top-10 pack, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Reliance Industries, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Hindustan Unilever Ltd, State Bank of India and ITC faced erosion from their market valuation. Bharti Airtel emerged as the only gainer.

The market valuation of TCS tumbled by Rs 1,10,351.67 crore to Rs 11,93,769.89 crore.

The valuation of index bellwether Reliance Industries tanked by Rs 95,132.58 crore to Rs 16,30,244.96 crore and that of Infosys plunged by Rs 49,050.04 crore to Rs 6,03,178.45 crore.

Bajaj Finance's market capitalisation (mcap) declined by Rs 14,127.07 crore to Rs 5,40,588.05 crore and that of ICICI Bank dropped by Rs 9,503.66 crore to Rs 9,43,264.95 crore.

Private sector lender HDFC Bank's valuation diminished by Rs 8,800.05 crore to Rs 13,90,408.68 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever Ltd dipped by Rs 3,500.89 crore to Rs 5,27,354.01 crore. *—PTI*

## 39.2% of bank accounts in India owned by women

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

A recent report from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) reveals that women own 39.2 per cent of bank accounts in India, with this figure rising to 42.2 per cent in rural areas. The publication, titled "Women and Men in India 2024: Selected Indicators and Data," provides a detailed examination of gender dynamics across various sectors, including education, health, and economic participation.

The report highlights women's contribution to total bank deposits at 39.7 per cent, and notes a significant increase in DEMAT accounts, which surged from 33.26 million to 143.02 million between March 2021 and November 2024. While male account holders outnumber females, growth of women's accounts, from 6.67 million to 27.71 million, indicates a positive trend.

The report also states that female voters accounted for 65.8 per cent of the electorate in the recent elections, surpassing male turnout for the first time. Furthermore, there has been a notable rise in female-headed startups, increasing from 1,943 in 2017 to 17,405 in 2024, showcasing the advancement of female entrepreneurship. —PTI

# Adani, Vedanta, Patanjali bidding for Jaiprakash associates

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Billionaire Gautam Adani's group, mining mogul Anil Agarwal's Vedanta, and yoga guru Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurveda are among 26 interested suitors vying to acquire Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL), which is currently undergoing insolvency proceedings to recover defaulted loans.

The company, which has diverse business interests in real estate, cement production, hospitality, and engineering and construction, issued a provisional list of prospective resolution applicants following its admission into the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Processby the National Company Law Tribunal on 3 June, 2024. JAL faces a staggering debt of approximately Rs 57,185 crore, primarily owed to the National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd, which has taken on the stressed loans from a consortium led by the State Bank of India.

Gautam Adani and Anil Agarwal PHOTO: X

Among those expressing interest are Adani Enterprises Ltd, Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd, and Jindal Power Ltd, along with a variety of other firms . JAL owns significant real estate projects including Jaypee Greens in Greater Noida, and has four cement plants in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, currently non-operational. The outstanding loans to financial institutions amount to Rs 55,409.28 crore as of 11 March, 2025. —PTI

## Swiggy faces Rs 7.59 cr tax

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Food and grocery delivery platform Swiggy has received an an assessment order for the April 2021 to March 2022 period, amounting to Rs 7.59 crore from the Office of the Profession Tax Officer, Pune. Violation of provisions pertaining to deduction of Profession Tax from the employees' salary has been alleged against the company. —PTI

## Zomato COO resigns

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Rinshul Chandra, Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Zomato's Food Delivery business, has tendered his resignation, the company has said in a regulatory filing. While the brand name of the company's food delivery business Zomato remains the same, along with the app, the company has changed the name of the corporate entity to Eternal. *—PTI*

## Biz Correspondent sector to be worth Rs 14K cr

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

A report by BLS E-Services forecasts that India's Business Correspondent (BC) sector will surpass Rs 14,700 crore by the financial year 2025, reflecting an impressive compound annual growth rate of 19 per cent.

This growth is largely attributed to the expansion of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, the deeper adoption of Basic Savings Bank Deposit Accounts , and the increasing prevalence of Direct Benefit Transfer schemes.

Business Correspondents serve as bank-appointed representatives, delivering vital banking services in underserved and remote regions. Operating on a commission-based model, BCs facilitate last-mile financial service delivery, earning fees based on transaction values.

The sector has seen substantial growth, rising from Rs 47 billion in FY2018 to Rs 102 billion in FY2023.

Currently, there are over 1.35 million BC agents across India, significantly increasing access to financial services for rural populations. —PTI

NEXT-GEN SAFETY MEASURE

# *Cybersecurity may be key feature in cars soon*

**MUMBAI, 6 APRIL**

With cars and transport vehicles becoming more connected and software-driven, automotive cybersecurity is likely to become a standard feature much like airbags or traction control, according to industry experts.

While many global players are racing to build cybersecurity solutions for the auto sector, some mobility platforms have begun testing Intrusion Detection and Prevention Systems (IDPS) and Vehicle Security Operations Centers (VSOC), they said. Next-generation vehicles face cybersecurity risks like tampering with internal vehicle network, GPS signal spoofing and remote control of steering and braking systems and others. The car makers say they are implementing advanced technological measures to safeguard vehicles to address rising cybersecurity threats.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Vikas Chaudhary, the founder of cybersecurity firm HackersEra, said that digital safety tools will become must-have features in vehicles just like airbags and traction control features which are mandated by regulatory bodies now.

Systems like IDPS and VSOC will not just prevent disasters, they may become a key differentiator in a buyer's checklist, he added.

VSOCs are centralized hubs that operate much like traditional IT security operations centres but are purpose-built for vehicles.

For fleet operators, connected public transport systems, and smart city deployments, a single compromised vehicle could pose a systemic risk, Chaudhary said.

Additionally, companies are committed to keeping vehicle software updated with the latest security patches, for it's a collective ecosystem responsibility, the spokesperson stated. *—PTI*

# Rural market beat urban market in FMCG growth

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Rural market growth continued to outpace that from the urban market for the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry in the March quarter, and margins remained under pressure as prices of some key commodity inputs remained at peak levels, according to business updates by leading players.

Besides, traditional trade (grocery shops) continued to be under pressure, while modern trade channels, e-Commerce and Quick commerce maintained their growth momentum, said listed FMCG companies like Dabur, Marico and AWL Agri Business (formerly Adani Wilmar) in their quarterly updates.

The persistent food inflation continues to impact demand in the urban market, which contributes nearly two-thirds of the total FMCG sales.

- FMCG companies are hopeful of a profitable growth in FY'26 despite the current headwind, banking on factors which include moderating retail and food inflation.

However, FMCG companies are hopeful of a profitable growth in FY'26 despite the current headwind, banking on factors which include moderating retail and food inflation as well as forecasts of a normal monsoon.

Homegrown FMCG firm Dabur, in its quarterly update for the fourth quarter of 2024-25, said: "During Q4, rural continues to be resilient and grew ahead of urban markets." *—PTI*

## Esha bags silver in Argentina Shooting World Cup

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Esha Singh secured a silver medal in the women's 25m pistol event at the ISSF World Cup in Buenos Aires, Argentina, marking her second individual World Cup silver. She scored 35 hits, finishing behind China's Sun Yujie, who won gold with 38 hits. Feng Sixuan of China claimed bronze. India's medal tally now includes a gold from Sift Kaur Samra in women's 3P and a bronze from Chain Singh in men's 50m rifle 3P. Manu Bhaker, also in the final, placed sixth. Esha's performance saw her surge from seventh to second after a flawless series, but Sun finished stronger to take the gold. India's skeet shooters, however, fell short in qualifications. *—ANI*

## Owen says he's dazzled by evolving football

**MUMBAI, 6 APRIL**

Former England and Real Madrid striker Michael Owen expressed uncertainty about fitting into today's evolving football landscape. Speaking in Mumbai ahead of a 'Legends Faceoff' match featuring iconic players like Luis Figo and Carles Puyol, Owen remarked, "The game has changed. Teams hardly play with two strikers now, and the role has evolved." He added that with fewer natural No. 9s in Europe, wingers are now scoring more goals. Owen, 45, admitted he'd likely have to adapt to a wider role. Despite the shift, he prefers the old-style two-striker system, speculating it may return as football trends change. Meanwhile, Figo commented on the uncertainty of Cristiano Ronaldo's 2026 World Cup participation. *—PTI*

## Desailly confident US visa norms won't hit FIFA WC

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

Football legend Marcel Desailly believes visa issues will not affect the 2026 FIFA World Cup, co-hosted by the US, Canada, and Mexico. Despite concerns over US visa delays and tougher regulations under President Trump, Desailly insists that "sport is above politics," citing previous World Cups, including the successful 2022 tournament in Qatar, despite early criticism. The former French international, who won the 1998 World Cup, emphasised the unifying power of football, which transformed France into "one country" after their victory. Desailly also praised Barcelona's resurgence in the Champions League, highlighting the importance of diversity in top-flight football. He also stressed the role of the Laureus Awards in supporting social change through sport. *—PTI*

## Crawford clinches SM Krishna Memorial title

**BENGALURU, 6 APRIL**

Oliver Crawford of Great Britain claimed the SM Krishna Memorial Open tennis title after his compatriot Jay Clarke retired midway due to an ankle injury on Sunday. Crawford, seeded second, dominated early, racing to a 4-0 lead within 25 minutes. He saved a breakpoint in his opening service game and capitalised on Clarke's double fault to break serve. After holding his own serve to love, Crawford broke Clarke again to establish his commanding lead. Clarke, who was playing in his fourth consecutive final, took a medical timeout for treatment on his right ankle. Although he managed to break Crawford's serve following the break, the injury hindered his movement. Despite his determination, Clarke retired during the eighth game due to sharp pain in his ankle. *—PTI*

India end Brazil 2025 World Boxing campaign on a high with 6 medals

*PHOTO: OLYMPICS.COM*

# India ends World Boxing Cup on a high with six medals

### Hitesh shines as the 1st Indian to clinch a Gold in the event

**NEW DELHI, 6 APRIL**

The Indian boxing contingent ended their campaign at the World Boxing Cup with an impressive haul of six medals, including a Gold won by Hitesh, at Foz Do Iguacu in Brazil.

It's India's first-ever outing in an elite-level international meet organised by World Boxing.

Hitesh became the first Indian boxer to clinch a Gold medal in the World Boxing Cup. His opponent Odel Kamara of England was injured and couldn't take to the ring in the 70kg final on Saturday.

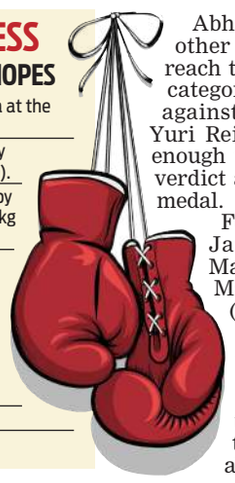
**BOXING SUCCESS**

**BOOSTS OLYMPIC HOPES**

- 6 medals won by India at the World Boxing Cup.
- 1 Gold medal — won by Hitesh (70kg category).
- 1 Silver medal — won by Abhinash Jamwal (65kg category).

**4 Bronze medals won by:**

- Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (50kg)
- Manish Rathore (55kg)
- Sachin (60kg)
- Vishal (90kg)



Abhinash Jamwal, the other Indian boxer to reach the final in the 65kg category, gave his best against local favourite Yuri Reis but could not do enough to get a favourable verdict and bagged a silver medal.

Four Indians—Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (50kg), Manish Rathore (55kg), Sachin (60kg) and Vishal (90kg) — bagged Bronze medals.

Hitesh credited the 10-day preparatory camp in Brazil ahead of the tournament as something that helped him and the team a lot.

"The camp helped me learn a few tactical nuances that helped me a lot in the competition. This tournament has provided us fantastic exposure at the highest level and I am happy that I could grab the gold medal," said Hitesh.

India had fielded a 10-member contingent at the World Boxing Cup, their first major international outing since the Paris Olympics.

The strong performance will not only boost the confidence of the players as they start preparing for the Olympic cycle ahead of the 2028 Los Angeles Games. *—PTI*

# Bumrah boosts spirit of Mumbai Indians

**MUMBAI, 6 APR**

Mumbai Indians got a major boost on Sunday when their ace fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah joined the squad ahead of their Indian Premier League contest against Royal Challengers Bengaluru here.

It remains to be ascertained if the Indian bowling spearhead has got the NCA fitness clearance to bowl in the tournament.

Mumbai Indians announced the development on social media on Sunday saying, "Once a cub now a lion, the lion is back to be the king of the jungle again."

Bumrah has been sidelined since the start of January when he suffered a back-related trouble during the fifth and final Test against Australia in Sydney. *—PTI*

**MI VS RCB**

**HEAD TO HEAD**

| | |
|---|---|
| PLAYED: | 33 |
| GT Won: | 19 |
| SRH Won: | 14 |
| NO RESULT | 0 |

MI vs RC Match starts at **7.30 pm IST**

## RR's Sandeep Sharma lauds Jofra's IPL form

**CHANDIGARH, 6 APRIL**

Jofra Archer's resurgence in form has been welcomed by his Rajasthan Royals teammate, Sandeep Sharma, following a shaky start to the IPL season. After conceding 76 runs in his first match against Sunrisers Hyderabad and 33 runs in just 2.3 overs against Kolkata Knight Riders, Archer redeemed himself in the Royals' recent clash with Punjab Kings, where he took two key wickets in the opening over.

"Starting any tournament like the IPL is high pressure. The nerves can get to you, which is probably what happened," Sandeep explained. He emphasised the bowler's world-class skill: "Very few can bring what he brings to the table."

Sandeep also contributed significantly, claiming two wickets for 21 runs as the Royals posted 205 for 4, restricting Punjab Kings to 155 for 9.

Commenting on the pitch conditions, he noted, "We read the pitch faster than the other team, which helped us execute our strategy effectively." *—PTI*

# FSDL threatens to terminate MDSP's ISL participation

**KOLKATA, 6 APRIL**

Indian Super League (ISL) organisers, Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL), have threatened to expel Mohammedan Sporting for failing to meet financial requirements outlined in their participation agreement. The club, which finished last in its debut ISL season, has been warned of potential expulsion unless it resolves critical financial issues by 11 April.

In a letter sent on 4 April, FSDL raised concerns over the club's inability to provide a clear statement of outstanding dues, including payments to players, technical staff, and vendors. The warning follows tensions with two of Mohammedan Sporting's investors, Gurugram-based Bunker Hill Sports and Kolkata's Shrachi Group, who have threatened to pull out due to unresolved shareholding disputes.

Both investors have expressed frustration over not receiving their agreed shares despite substantial investments.

Failure to comply could result in the termination of the club's participation in the ISL

*PHOTO: ISL*

FSDL has demanded a detailed plan from the club to secure a replacement investor and submit a statement of dues within a week.

Failure to comply could result in the termination of the club's participation in the ISL.

Ishtiaque Ahmed Raju, the club's general secretary, remained hopeful that the issues would be resolved soon, citing ongoing negotiations between the investors.

He assured that the shareholding dispute was nearing finalisation.

Mohammedan Sporting's financial instability and lack of transparency with FSDL during the season have raised significant concerns about the club's ability to meet operational expenses moving forward. *—PTI*

# Verstappen wins Japanese GP for 4 times in a row

**SUZUKA, 6 APRIL**

Max Verstappen secured a dominant victory at the Japanese Grand Prix, ending a "mini-slump" of two wins from the last 16 races. The four-time defending Formula 1 champion took his fourth consecutive win at Suzuka, extending his strong record on the Japanese circuit and halting the momentum of McLaren's Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri, who had won the season's opening races in Australia and China.

Verstappen, who started from pole after setting a course-record lap in qualifying, led throughout most of the race. Norris, who finished second, and Piastri, who was third, both struggled to break past Verstappen on the narrow track. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc came in fourth, with Mercedes' George Russell and teammate Kimi Antonelli in sixth. Yuki Tsunoda, in his first race with Red Bull's top team, finished 12th.

Verstappen's win was marked by a key moment when Norris was forced to drive over the grass after a pit stop battle with Verstappen around the 20-lap mark.

Verstappen praised Honda, whose engines power Red Bull, after the race, which marked the end of Honda's F1 supply contract. Despite the challenge from McLaren, Verstappen's flawless drive helped him stretch his lead in the championship standings, now just one point behind Norris, who leads with 62 points to Verstappen's 61. *—PTI*

Verstappen led throughout most of the race

*PHOTO: X*

## Hans Niemann exits chess grand slam

**PARIS, 6 APRIL**

Hans Niemann has withdrawn from the Paris leg of the Freestyle Chess Grand Slam Tour, just 48 hours before the event's start. The organisers announced his withdrawal on social media, citing no reason, and named Nodirbek Abdusattorov as his replacement. Niemann had previously expressed his excitement about participating in the tournament, stating that he was "deeply grateful for the opportunity to compete" and looking forward to playing in Paris.

Niemann's participation was highly anticipated, especially given his past controversy with Magnus Carlsen, whom he was set to face in the tournament. Carlsen accused Niemann of cheating in 2022, leading to a USD 100 million lawsuit. Although the lawsuit was settled in 2023, tensions between the two players remain. The withdrawal has sparked speculation, with some wondering if the controversy about Niemann's alleged cheating had any bearing on his decision to pull out. *—Salar News*

# Thuram bags bizarre goal as Milan concedes

**MILAN, 6 APRIL**

Marcus Thuram made a bittersweet return to Parma by scoring a bizarre goal, yet his contribution couldn't secure a victory for Inter Milan, who drew 2-2 on Saturday. The Serie A leaders briefly led 2-0 at halftime but were unable to hold on against Parma, who remain just above the relegation zone.

Inter's first goal came from a fortunate deflection, with Matteo Darmian converting Federico Dimarco's cross after it clipped the post. Thuram's goal, his 14th in the league this season, was even stranger: after shinning a cross from Henrikh Mkhitaryan, it looped towards the goal, resulting in a comical own goal from Parma defender Pontus Almqvist as he inadvertently deflected the ball off his face.

Thuram's father, former World Cup winner Lilian Thuram, watched from the stands, both father and son appearing bemused by the goal. Parma fought back in the second half, with Adrián Bernabé scoring from distance before Jacob Ondrejka's deflected effort levelled the match.

Marcus Thuram

*PHOTO: X*

In another notable game, AC Milan salvaged a 2-2 draw against Fiorentina after trailing 2-0 early on. *—PTI*

# Madrid suffers 2–1 defeat to Valencia

**BARCELONA, 6 APRIL**

Real Madrid suffered a shock 2–1 defeat at home to Valencia on Saturday, dealing a blow to their La Liga title defence. Vinícius Júnior missed a penalty early in the match, with Valencia's goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili saving his low shot. The visitors took the lead in the 17th minute through Mouctar Diakhaby's header, but Vinícius equalised after halftime.

Despite pressing for a winner, Madrid conceded an injury-time goal from Hugo Duro, marking Valencia's first away win of the season. Coach Carlo Ancelotti defended his team's performance but acknowledged the defeat made the title race much harder. "We will fight until the end because we still have a chance," he stated.

Meanwhile, Barcelona dropped points at home, settling for a 1-1 draw against Real Betis. Gavi Páez opened the scoring early, but Betis equalised through a header from Natan just minutes later. Barcelona's goalkeeper, Adrian San Miguel, made several crucial saves to prevent further goals. *—PTI*

**ANGERS BEATEN 1-0**

# *Luis Enrique leads PSG to Ligue 1 Title*

**PARIS, 6 APRIL**

Paris Saint-Germain secured their 13th Ligue 1 title with six games to spare, celebrating a record-extending triumph under coach Luis Enrique. A 1-0 win over Angers on Saturday, sealed by teenage forward Désiré Doué's volley, clinched the title. PSG now boast 23 wins from 28 matches, with 80 goals scored and just 26 conceded. With second-placed Monaco losing 2-1 to Brest, PSG's lead is a commanding 24 points.

Luis Enrique was jubilantly lifted into the air by his staff, drenched in water bottles in celebration. The win marks PSG's 11th French championship and fourth consecutive league title since Qatari investors took over in 2011. Enrique reflected on the season, praising the team's attractive football and their achievements.

Captain Marquinhos, who joined PSG in 2013, earned his 10th Ligue 1 title. Reflecting on the post-galactico era, Marquinhos emphasised the unity within the squad, particularly as the team is without stars like Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé, and Neymar. PSG now eyes a quadruple, having already won the French Super Cup and Ligue 1. They face Aston Villa in the Champions League quarterfinals and Reims in the French Cup final.

Although PSG struggled against Angers, with Doué's 55th-minute goal proving the difference, the win was enough to secure the title. *—PTI*

Luis Enrique was carried in triumph by his players at the end of the match

*PHOTO: X*